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LEELINA

. . THE . .

WHITE CANOE

AND OTHER LEGENDS OF THE OJIBWAYS

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PREPARED FROM LEGENDS
HEARD FROM THE INDIANS
THEMSELVES BY : : : : :

ELIZABETH MONCKTON
(Elizabeth Davis Fielder)

With reproductions of cover-design and 8 original pyrographic drawings on birch bark by the author : : : : :

S. G. C.

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TO MY FRIEND

MRS. ELEANOR L. ELDER,

This book is affectionately inscribed.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is finished! The wonderful First Book which has hovered in the background of my imagination as the goal of all achievement ever since my youthful ambition was first fired by reading of Mr. Finney's illustrious turnip. Its form, however, has undergone some changes. In those days the Book was a volume of poems bound in green and gold, with my portrait as a frontispiece and an autograph underneath that nobody could read. It is useless to enumerate the causes which led to this modification; the Critic doesn't need them, and the Gentle Reader wouldn't appreciate them.

The legends comprised in this little volume were not unearthed from musty books hidden away on dark shelves in public libraries, but by word of mouth, in the lodges and around the camp-fires during one long lazy summer when I strayed with wandering bands of Indians from one

camping ground to another. The squaws told them as they crouched on their rush mats beading moccasins or braiding baskets; the old men told them as they lay before the camp-fires at evening and watched the smoke from their pipes curl upward, and I give them as they were given to me, as the old men had handed them down from generation to generation, as they will be passed on to their children, and their children's children, as long as their is a wandering Ojibway left in the forests along the Big-Sea-Water. The truth is, Gentle Reader, Voracious Critic, I *had* to do something to make back the money I spent that Summer for tobacco to keep the story-teller's pipe working.

The natural attitude of the young writer coming with his first book, is meek and apologetic. He comes on all-fours, so to speak. I am only enabled to stand erect and claim for my book what it deserves by means of constant bolstering with Mr. Brander Matthews' shrewd advice in "The Philosophy of the Preface." I am also supported by the firm conviction that it will take a critic to discover all the good things that are

really in it. The student of theology will be interested in tracing the analogy between these legends and Bible narrative, and noting how nearly the lines approach sometimes, leaving only the racial differences of the people between them. The student of literature will find them worthy of consideration as a contribution to folk-lore, and the small boy and little girl who want only a good story will be delighted to find an entirely new tribe of fairies, and a new and horrible giant. In short, you have only to read this introduction—and I hope nobody will fail to read it—in order to be convinced that no family and no individual can afford to be without this First Book.

I think I have now followed Mr. Matthews' advice to the letter, saving and excepting that of boasting of its defects. The only reason I have omitted this is that there are no defects.

E. M.

THE WHITE CANOE.

IT was four days since the women had borne her out of the lodge and buried her in the edge of the forest. Four days, and Waywassimo had not tasted food and only left his lodge at evening to kindle the fire upon her grave. Four times was the spirit's camp-fire lighted as Waywassimo followed the soul of his beloved on its lonely journey to the Land of Shadows, but now the charred and blackened embers lay untouched upon her grave and a veil had fallen between the soul of Waywassimo and his beloved.

The squaws brought food and placed it inside the lodge door, but Waywassimo turned away his face. He had no desire for the food of the old women when all his soul was hungry for the voice of his beloved, his beautiful Leelina with eyes like stars and a voice like the wind in the pines. Tall and straight as a young fir tree!

Graceful, bending like a willow, swift of foot and light of laughter! No, there was never another like her, Leelina the gentle, Leelina the fair! Another moon and she would have been his bride, but now the women had buried her in the edge of the forest, and Waywassimo was alone!

They brought his bow and arrows and laid them inside the lodge door. For a moment the blood of the hunter quickened in his veins; then he remembered that no longer could he lay at the feet of Leelina his trophies from the chase, so he turned away his face and heeded them not.

Again they came and laid his tomahawk and war-club inside the lodge door and without he heard the tom-toms and the saw-saw-quan of the warriors. Once more his pulse leaped and he made as if to array himself for battle; but when he laid his hands on the war garments, rich with wampum and porcupine quills, he remembered that Leelina would not be there to join in the feasting, and to hear the stories of his prowess on their return, so he turned away his face and heeded them not.

Then they came no more, and Waywassimo

sat alone in his lodge, neither eating nor drinking, until the women shook their heads and said: "We will soon kindle the spirit's camp-fire on another grave in the forest."

As Waywassimo sat alone in his lodge, weak and faint from long fasting, he dreamed strange dreams. All the stories the old men had told him came back to him, but now they were not as old men's tales, but mingled strangely with his dreams of Leelina.

They told him of a pathway leading from earth to the Land of Souls, and how the great Master of Life, in pity for those who loved well, had granted this boon that they might see one another again. Dim and uncertain was the pathway and few on earth had found it, for the way was long and weary and the love of many grew cold.

Night after night, as Waywassimo lay on the mat in his lodge, the dream came to him as the old men had told it, and at last he knew that he should have no peace until he had found the mysterious pathway and seen Leelina again.

He took a handful of corn in his meda-bag and

a few arrows in his quiver, then stealing out of the village in the darkness, he stood beside the grave of Leelina. His spirit was going to seek hers, yet in all the four corners of the earth he knew not which way to turn. At last he drew his bow-string and sent an arrow singing toward the stars. The arrow fell to the southward, and setting his face in that direction, Waywassimo started on his journey.

For many days he walked, through forests, over rank beaver-meadows, across streams and marshes, without finding any trace of the mysterious pathway. Bewildered and faint with weariness, he kept on until his limbs gave way beneath him and it seemed as if he had but left the village to perish in an unknown wilderness. But not to save life itself would he turn back from seeking Leelina, for if it was the will of the Great Spirit that he perish, then his soul should be forever with hers in the Islands of the Blessed. Then, as Waywassimo strengthened his resolve and moved forward on his journey, a Spirit came to him out of the shadows of the forest, and, taking his hand, pointed to a trail under the

leaves and dead grasses. No word did the Spirit speak, and when Waywassimo lifted his eyes from the trail, he was alone, but he was standing in the pathway to the Land of Souls.

On and on he went, his weariness falling from him and his limbs strengthening with renewed vigor. The snow was deep on the ground and matted thick on the trees when he left the village; but, as he proceeded on his journey, the snow gradually disappeared, the gray clouds dissolved and floated away, and over him arched the tender blue of Spring skies. The boughs flushed with swelling buds, and through them swept a breeze warm and balmy and odorous with the breath of flowers.

No sign of human life did Waywassimo see in all his journey, but the breeze grew warmer and balmier, the trees burst into full leaf, wild flowers grew along his pathway, and the forest was melodious with the song of birds. Moving on to the southward the foliage became richer and more luxuriant, more brilliant the plumage of the birds, and at night-time myriads of fireflies twinkled and glowed in the dense forest.

Now the trail became plainer, and by this sign Waywassimo knew that he was nearing his journey's end. At last it emerged from the forest and led along a sloping hillside, on the summit of which stood a solitary lodge. Within the lodge sat an old man, with whitened locks upon his shoulders. He was clothed in a single garment of skins and held a staff in his hand. Waywassimo knew by the stories of the old men that it was Chebiabos, the ruler of the Land of Souls.

"I have looked for you long, my son," the old man said, advancing to meet Waywassimo. "She whom you seek is not here, but she passed this way a few days before you. Enter. I will give you food, you may rest in my lodge, and then I will guide you upon the same journey."

Waywassimo entered the lodge of Chebiabos, he partook of the food placed before him, and lying down on a bed of boughs he slept as he had not slept since Leelina went away.

The sun was high in the heavens when Chebiabos led Waywassimo out of the lodge, and pointed to a lake stretching through the valley below. Its clear waters sparkled in the sunlight,

and beyond it, misty and blue lay the fair plains of the Land of Souls.

"Behold the Plains of the Blessed, my son," Chebiabos said. "You stand now upon its border, but before you can go forward you must lay aside your bow and arrows, for no sign of warfare or bloodshed is allowed to enter that land."

Then leading Waywassimo back into his lodge Chebiabos stripped him of his travel worn raiment, of all the implements of hunting and warfare, and clothed him in a beautiful garment, soft and white as the finest moose skin, and fringed with wampum that shone like silver in the sunlight. Then when Waywassimo walked forth from the lodge, he found his feet light as if winged so that he could travel with no feeling of weariness.

Together they entered the forest bordering the lake which divided them from the Land of Souls. Here Waywassimo found all things as he had left them behind. The trees of his own forest grew around him, birds flitted through their branches, and animals sprang across his path. The sun shone brightly on a familiar world, but over all

brooded a strange oppressive stillness. The trees swayed in the breeze, but there was no rustling of leaves, no chirp and twitter of bird song, no whir of wings, no drone and hum of insects, and not even a twig crackled under foot as they moved on through the forest.

The silence grew heavier and more oppressive until Waywassimo felt a strange surging and singing in his ears, and his brain reeled with a sense of unreality. His companion uttered no word as they passed through the silent forest, and he felt himself suffocated with the pounding of his own heart in his bosom, and the surging of the blood in his ears became as the roaring of a cataract.

Stretching out his hand Waywassimo made as if to lay it on the trunk of a tree growing beside the way, then the surging in his ears stopped, and his heart stood still, for his hand swept through the air and dropped at his side. There was no tree! Again he stooped to pluck a flower growing among the moss, but his fingers closed upon themselves, and there was no flower! Then Chebiabos turned to him and said:

"It is so, my son, we are in the Land of Shadows. Behind you are all realities. These are but the forms of things that have beautified the earth and perished. The Master of Life is great and very good, and he has ordained that nothing be lost. The flowers that bloom for a day, the trees that waved their branches through the sun and storm of many years, all things that his hand has fashioned live forever. See, my son, the forest is full of birds, but there is no song. They are the shadows of birds that have sung to you on the other side, and the animals which you see around you are but the forms of your own good and evil thoughts. You walk in the Land of Shadows, my son, the border country to the Land of Souls."

At last they emerged from the forest and found themselves on the bank of the lake. As Waywassimo strained his eyes across the level shining water a speck appeared among the mists upon the horizon, the lingering floating mists of morning that melted sea and sky together. Now it fell and now it lifted, sometimes flying, sometimes floating like a heron or a wild goose, dipping,

flashing in the sunlight, but ever coming nearer, nearer, until the straining eyes of Waywassimo saw the speck upon the water, not a wild goose nor a heron, but a shining white Cheemaun coming toward him across the water. None there was to steer or paddle, but straight along a track of splendor came the white canoe to Waywassimo. Now it grounded safe among the glittering pebbles, then he saw that on the bottom lay a paddle made of silver.

"It is the White Canoe come to carry you across the lake," Chebiabos said, "and there is no other means of passage to the Land of Souls. I leave you here, for every pilgrim must make the voyage alone, but if you have faith all will be well."

Then Waywassimo stepped into the White Canoe, and taking the silver paddle, pushed off from shore. When he had gone some distance out upon the lake he saw another canoe approaching, gliding over the shining water, and dropping showers of crystal spray from the gleaming silver paddle. Nearer and nearer it came, and Waywassimo dropped his paddle and again

strained his eyes across the glimmering sheet of water. The slender figure which swayed with every dip of the paddle was a woman. Now he could see the glittering fringe of wampum on her arms, and waist and bosom, see her dark and floating tresses, see the oval of her features,—yes, it was his lost love, Leelina!

On and on she came until the two White Canoes floated side by side, but when Waywassimo stood up and held out his arms to her, Leelina smiled and laid her finger on her lips as if warning him to silence.

Together they paddled on, and now Waywassimo noticed that the waves were running high though the sun still shone, and there was not a cloud in the sky. Higher and higher they grew, rolling against the canoes, as if they would swamp them, and as Waywassimo bent to his paddle he found himself looking down through the clear transparent water straight to the bottom of the lake, and his heart grew cold with fear as he saw that the sands on the bottom were strewn with the bones of those who had perished in crossing.

Waywassimo would have turned back, but

when he looked at Leelina he saw no terror in her face, but she lifted her finger again and again to her lips, and smiled at him across the billows. Then Waywassimo's courage and faith came back, and as he bent again to the paddle he found that whenever the White Canoe touched the foaming, angry waves they melted away and left a smooth path before it.

Now he saw other canoes likewise struggling among the waves. Some toiled for a little while and then sank out of sight; others kept on, battling among the billows, and a few, like their own, found the waters calmed before them. Only the canoes of little children met no waves but the waters parted before them, leaving a luminous pathway straight to the Land of Souls.

So Waywassimo learned that it was according to their faith, and all fear and uncertainty departed from him and with steady arm he dipped his paddle and smiled back at Leelina across the water.

Now an island seemed to rise out of the lake before his eyes and an invisible hand was steering him straight toward its sloping shores, on

and on until a great wave swept the canoe high upon the sandy beach. Looking up he found Leelina before him, and she held out her hands to him, with a smile on her lips and the light of love in her starry eyes.

"It is the Happy Island," she said. "The Great Master of Life has permitted us to tarry here awhile," and taking his hand she led him along the shore and into the forest.

Long they lingered on the Happy Island, Waywassimo and his love, Leelina. Together they wandered over green and sunny meadows, through the dim and shadowy woodlands, listened to the songs of gladness, to the robin and the blue bird; heard the wind among the branches, heard the rippling of the waters, heard their own hearts throb together while they sat in blissful silence, with the smiling heavens above them and the smiling earth around them. The icy breath of Kab-bi-bon-ok-ka never blew upon that island, not a snowflake from the Northland, not an ice-crust on the brooklets, but drowsy, dreamy, endless Summer reigned upon the Happy Island.

Waywassimo knew not how long they lingered

there together, for light of sun and moon there was none, naught to measure days in passing, naught to mark the night and morning, but all was one long radiant noonday and the smiles and sighs of lovers were its light, its air, its sunshine.

At last there came a day when a voice spoke to Waywassimo out of the perfumed breezes, saying:

"The desire of your soul has been given you. You have seen Leelina and had a foretaste of the joy which shall be yours when you are summoned to the Land of Ponemah. But the time is not yet. It is ordained that you return to your people and rule them for many years. Not in sadness and sorrow shall you dwell among them, but as my messenger of joy and peace. Leelina remains to await your coming; you will find her still young and beautiful when at last I call you from the Land of Snows."

Then Waywassimo awoke and found himself still in the Valley of Bitterness and Tears.

THE REVENGE OF UNK-TE-HA.

An Ojibway Legend of the Flood.

MANY ages ago when the world was new and the gods and men dwelt together upon it, the mighty Wa-zha-wand, who had created earth, and air, and water, placed three great Manitous to rule over them and rested from his labors.

Then Unk-te-ha, the Manitou of Waters, called together the tribes of men and laid thus his commands upon them:

"Of all the fish that are in the waters shalt thou have for food. Of all the fowl that are on the marshlands, and of every creature belonging to my kingdom shalt thou have to eat. Each day shalt thou take for each day's need, but never in distrust of the goodness of Unk-te-ha shalt thou take food for the morrow, and never in wantonness shalt thou take the life of any creature be-

longing to the Kingdom of Waters. Hear and heed, lest the anger of Unk-te-ha come upon you and he slay you."

Now Nanabozho was a great fisherman. Every creature of the Under-Water World knew him, and when he went forth on the Gitchee-Gumee in his canoe of birch-bark up from the green and shadowy depths came the pike and the sturgeon, came all the fish in the Kingdom of Waters, and sported about the canoe and played with the bait of Nanabozho.

Cunning were they and very active, and as they dived and darted in the water they dared the skill of Nanabozho, and mocked and taunted when he could not take them.

Then the anger of Nanabozho arose strong against them, and taking his magic line of twisted cedar he threw it far across the water. Quickly the fishes dropped to the floor of the Gitchee-Gumee, for they feared the magic line of Nanabozho. But the line was long and soon it found them, and without hook or bait it drew them, until Nanabozho covered the bottom of his Cheemaun with the panting and helpless bodies of his

tormentors. The dropping sun warned him that night was coming on, and when he drew his canoe upon the shore, he found that it contained more fish than he could eat in many days.

At evening, when Unk-te-ha came and walked along the sandy beach he found the canoe of Nanabozho and in it the fish that he had taken. Then the anger of Unk-te-ha was great against Nanabozho, because he had forgotten his commands, and he determined to punish him, that never again should a mortal forget or defy the wrath of the God of Waters.

Long Unk-te-ha pondered how he might take Nanabozho and make of him an example to the people forever, for he was wise and great and very cunning; more cunning by far than any creature in all the Upper World, and Unk-te-ha knew of none in all his kingdom wise and great enough to capture Nanabozho.

So he called a council of his people that they might talk together and choose one of their number for the task. At his command the White Loon, the door-keeper of the Under-Water World, went forth and bade the people come to the coun-

cil of Unk-te-ha. The Ken-o-zha, the Na-ma, and all the fish that had sported about the canoe of Nanabozho, and by their taunting made him forget the commands of Unk-te-ha, came to the council called to bring him to punishment.

Long they talked and wise their councils, for much they feared and much they hated Nanabozho, and while they talked and while they pondered, up from the rivers and marshlands, like a mist arose the smoke of their Puk-wa-nas. But naught came of the great council, for when the pipes were cold and empty, when the smoke had all ascended, not one had been found who would undertake to capture Nanabozho.

Then the council of Unk-te-ha was dissolved and the anger of the Manitou of Waters was hot against his own people for their cowardice as it was against his enemy, Nanabozho, and Unk-te-ha said: "No mortal shall forget my commands or defy my laws, for if one goes unpunished then will all my kingdom be despoiled. Nanabozho shall be taken though I send all the waters of the Gitchee-Gumee to overwhelm him."

On the same day as Nanabozho was baking a

fish before his camp-fire at evening, a Wawonaissa flew into a bush near by and called to him:

"Leave your fish and flee to the mountains, Nanabozho, for behold! the great Unk-te-ha is angry, and he has sent the waters of the Gitchee-Gumee to overwhelm you."

Nanabozho looked toward the spot where he had left his canoe, and he saw the waters rising high upon the shore, then he knew that the Wawonaissa had spoken truly, and that the Under-Water Manitou sought to destroy him. So he left his fish on the twigs before the fire, and as he fled he looked behind him and saw the oncoming waters sweep over the spot and put out his camp-fire.

Far up the hillside he found a wolverine burrowing into the earth.

"Hide me, hide me, my little brother!" Nanabozho cried. "Hide me deep in the ground, for I have angered the great Unk-te-ha, and he has sent the waters of the Gitchee-Gumee to overwhelm me!"

"Come inside, my brother," the wolverine replied, "and I will hide you so deep that no crea-

ture of the Under-Water World will ever find you."

Into the burrow went Nanabozho with his little brother, the wolverine, and they dug deep into the heart of the mountain, casting the earth behind them so that the opening was filled against the pursuing waters. But all in vain was the labor of the wolverine, for soon little rivulets penetrated the burrow, and Nanabozho knew that he would be imprisoned and starved by the uprising waters, if he was not drowned.

Then he besought the wolverine to open a way for him on the other side of the mountain, as far as might be from the shore of the Gitchee-Gumee, but when Nanabozho looked out again upon the earth, he saw that not upon the highest mountain could he find safety. Over all the world spread the waters of the Gitchee-Gumee, creeping through the valleys, rising along the hillsides, and in all the earth there was not a spot where they might not find him.

Nanabozho knew that all his wisdom and all his skill would be required to save him from the anger of the God of Waters.

Then he remembered that not he alone would suffer, but all his friends of the Upper World, so he determined to call a council of his people, as the God of Waters had done, that they might conspire together to save themselves and defeat the revenge of Unk-te-ha.

So he sent the flying turtle, the messenger of the Ojibways, abroad over the land with a message to his people that they meet him in council.

Quickly they came at the summons of Nanabozho, for was he not their elder brother, wise and great and good to look upon, the beloved of the Great Spirit? From the meadows and the lowlands, from the forests and the prairies, came the friends of Nanabozho,—came the deer, the Skanodo, came the squirrel and the rabbit, came the elk and the bison—all the friends of Nanabozho swiftly came at his summons.

Then, as he filled a pipe with fragrant leaves and gave it to them, thus spake Nanabozho:

"Hear me, O my brothers, for little time is left for speaking. I have angered Unk-te-ha, the Manitou of Waters, and because there was none in his kingdom strong and brave enough to take

Nanabozho, he has sent all the waters of the Gitchee-Gumee to overwhelm him. But behold, O my brothers, not I alone must suffer but every creature of the Upper World must perish that Unk-te-ha be avenged. Shall it be so, my brothers? Are we not yet strong and wise and cunning enough to defeat the wrath of the God of Waters and save ourselves? If you will but help me we will show to the tribes of men that Unk-te-ha is not a mighty Manitou but a Shau-go-dai-a, who is not able to take the friends of Nanabozho in battle. Let us built a raft, my brothers, great and strong, so that every creature of the Upper World may come upon it and be saved."

Even as he spake they replied with one voice of assent: "It shall be as our brother Nanabozho wills. Let us build a raft which will float in safety all the friends of Nanabozho, that they may mock the anger of Unk-te-ha!"

There upon the top of the mountain they built the raft. Strong and firm they made it, and when the rising waters lifted it from the summit on it were gathered in safety all the friends

of Nanabozho, all the animals of the forests and the prairies, but no creature of his own kind was with Nanabozho on the raft.

Many days they floated on the waters and around the raft came the people of the kingdom of Unk-te-ha to mock and taunt them, for now that there were no lands to hunt in, no fields of rice, and corn, and berries, they hoped that Nanabozho and his friends would starve on the raft which they had made. But it was not so, for still they had the magic line of twisted cedar, and when they cast it into the waters, they drew up fish so that they had food enough and to spare.

By and by the friends of Nanabozho wearied of the raft and longed for the forests and prairies of their own country. Then they determined to send one of their number, that he might dive into the water and find how far the land lay below. The otter was the first to make the effort, but after remaining long under the water he came back without having found any trace of land. Again he dived, but though they waited and watched for him long, he never came back

to the raft, for Unk-te-ha lay in wait for him and drew him into his lodge in the Under-Water World, so that he might carry no messages to his brothers on the raft.

Again Nanabozho and his friends took council together and the musk-rat was selected to go in search of land. Long he remained under water, so long that his brothers on the raft feared that he, too, had been captured and carried to the lodge of the Under-Water Manitou, but at last his dead body appeared floating on the water and was drawn up on the raft.

When Nanabozho examined the body of their little brother, he found that the tightly closed paws were filled with moist earth. Then he said to his friends on the raft: "Be happy, O my brothers, for we are saved. The great Unk-te-ha will never call back this flood that we may have our own lands to hunt in, our own rivers to fish in and our own fields to plant the Mondamin. But the great Master of Life has seen our weariness upon this raft, and has had pity on his people, so he has sent a new earth that we may not float forever on this flood of waters."

When Nanabozho had ceased speaking, he took a bit of earth from the paw of the musk-rat, and, rubbing it dry upon the palm of his hand, he held it before his lips, and with the breath of his mouth blew it far out upon the waters. Then before their eyes, where the earth fell, there grew up an island large enough to afford a resting place for the raft.

"But what avails this barren island?" the brothers of Nanabozho pleaded when once they felt the solid earth beneath their feet. "There are no forests and prairies, and nothing but fish to eat. We are weary, O our elder brother, and long for the green forests, the roaring rivers and rushing winds of our Northland."

So they vexed Nanabozho with their complaining until he made a lodge apart and went into it, that by fasting and prayer he might learn of the Gitchee Manitou how to relieve his brothers and free himself of their repining.

Six days he remained in the fasting-lodge, tasting no food until a Spirit came to him in his dreams and told him the will of the Master of Life concerning them. On the seventh day Nana-

bozho came out of the fasting-lodge and asked food of his brothers. When he had eaten, he arose and walked to the edge of the water, and, taking up a handful of earth, he rubbed it dry in the palm of his hand, and, holding it before his lips, with the breath of his mouth he blew it out upon the water. Where it fell there arose other earth and joined to the island, and so he walked around the shore blowing handfuls of earth upon the water, while his brothers followed him and watched the island grow.

Many days Nanabozho worked as the Gitchee-Manitou had directed him, stopping to rest when he was weary, and eating the food that was brought to him when he was hungry, until at last the earth stretched behind him farther than the eye could see. Then he sent out the Singebis that she might go around the island and bring back to him word of its size. Each day he sent out scouts, and, as it took them longer and longer to complete the circuit, he knew how rapidly the island grew.

At last there came a day when the messenger did not return, neither the next nor the next, and

Nanabozho knew that it had grown to be a great land, with broad prairies and mighty forests, with rushing rivers and placid lakes, and that his brothers who were with him on the raft, were now scattered abroad over it never to be gathered together again.

While Nanabozho pondered on the strange and wonderful thing which had happened, a beautiful light began to steal across the sky and drop its reflection in the water; a light such as he had never seen before, tender like the glow in the east at morning, and trembling like the silver track of the moon on the water. Brighter and brighter it grew, until it took upon itself a shape like unto the curve of his bow of ash wood, and glorious with the dyes of all the flowers that grew upon the Muskoday in springtime.

Then, while Nanabozho gazed in awe and wonder, the White Loon came floating to him along the curve of the many-colored bow, and as she sailed straight to his feet, this is the message she bore:

"It is a sign to you, my brother, that the Unk-te-ha has forgiven, and that never again will

there be enmity between the children of earth and the people of the Under-Water World. Cast your line into the water and you will find an offering from Unk-te-ha, and as long as you shall see the many-colored bow in the heavens you will know that the Manitou of Waters is your friend."

Then Nanabozho cast his line into the water as the White Loon had directed, but when he would pull it in he felt it draw and tighten so that all his strength was required to bring it to shore. When it was done he found a great fish upon the sand at his feet, armored with bone and striped like a warrior with war paint. It was the Nishe-Nama, the King of Fishes, an offering of good-will from Unk-te-ha to Nanabozho.

So Nanabozho stripped the bark from the birch trees and made him a wigwam to live in. A bow of ash wood also made he, and with arrows filled his quiver. Into the forest he went once more to hunt the bear, and deer and bison. At night he cooked his meat before the camp-fire, and smoked his pipe filled with leaves and bark of willows. But Nanabozho was lonely, for there was no one to hear his stories and smoke a pipe

with him beside the camp-fire, and he longed for one of his own kind to bear him company.

Again he built a wigwam apart and went into it to fast, that the Master of Life might look upon him in his loneliness and send other people to be with him upon the earth.

Six days he fasted and no food passed his lips. On the seventh day as he lay on his mat of rushes weak with hunger, a voice came to him out of the sky, saying:

"I have heard your prayers, O Nanabozho, and seen your fasting. It is not given me to enter the dwellings of men, but you may come to the lodge of the Gitchee-Manitou that we may take council together how the new earth may be peopled with those of your own kind."

As the voice ceased Nanabozho felt himself slowly rising into the air until he passed through an opening in the heavens and entered the lodge of the Gitchee-Manitou.

Many days lasted the great council of Nanabozho and the Gitchee-Manitou, and many pipes they smoked together while the great Master of Life told him of the tribes that would be sent on

the earth and how he should rule them in love. Then, when the council was ended, Nanabozho saw the heavens opened and heard the voice of the Master of Life saying:

"Go, my son, to a land and a people that will be ready for you. Remember all the words I have spoken to you that you rule them in kindness and love. Let war and bloodshed cease, and as long as the many-colored bow remains as a sign of the peace of Unk-te-ha let there also be peace among the tribes of men. Not in your own body do I send you back, but as a great White Eagle will you return to earth. Far below you, where lies a shining spot like a bead of wampum on a belt of green, will you find the Big-Sea-Water. In all the length and breadth of the new land which I have made this spot I have kept as the home of my chosen people. Here the forests are greener, the meadows are fairer; here are all things needful for the life and happiness of my people, and from the dawn of Seg-wun, the Spring, until the coming of Pe-bo-an, the Winter, the land is as fair as the smile of the Great Spirit can make it. Go, my son, and when you

reach the shores of the shining Big-Sea-Water, pluck from beneath your wings the soft and downy feathers, and scatter them on the earth. Do all things as I have commanded you, for I speak with you face to face no more until you come to me in the Islands of the Blessed, in the land of Ponemah!"

Thus Nanabozho left the lodge and council of the Gitchee-Manitou, and came back to earth in the form of a great White Eagle, but as he drew near the shores of the Big-Sea-Water he saw no sign of the people whom he had been told would be there to receive him. Yet Nanabozho doubted not, for he knew that the Master of Life could not lie; and, remembering all things that he had told him, he plucked the white and downy feathers from beneath his wings and scattered them along the shore. Then he looked behind him, where the feathers had fallen to the earth, and he saw men and women walking where none had been before. And Nanabozho knew that thus was fulfilled the promise of the Gitchee-Manitou that he should not be left alone, and that thus he had sent his chosen people upon the earth.

And to-day, along the shores of the Big-Sea-Water are the lodges and the camp-fires, the hunting-grounds and the corn fields of a peaceful and happy people—the people whom the Great Spirit sent to earth on the wings of Nanabozho, and we call them the Ojibways.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE STARS

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE STARS.

WAU-PEE, the White Hawk, lived alone in his lodge in the midst of the forest. It was not because Wau-pee was old, or ugly, or feeble that he lived alone, for he was young, and straight, and strong, and many of the maidens in the village followed him with tender glances when he came to join the young men in their games and the old men in their councils.

It was only because Wau-pee loved the stillness of the forest better than the chattering of women in his wigwam that he cooked his own food and kept his own lodge-fire burning. Never once did he look back to meet the tender glances of the maidens, and never once did he linger in the village when the games and councils were ended, for his heart went after the rippling waters and singing winds and his own wigwam in the dim forest.

When Wau-pee put arrows into his quiver and went forth into the forest to hunt, he came not home empty-handed. There were skins in his lodge, and wampum, and food, and the voices of the forest spoke to the soul of the White Hawk, so he lived alone, remote from the villages of his people, and he was rich and happy.

But one day there came a change. The singing of the wind sounded not so sweet to Wau-pee, but mournfully sighed around the wigwam until his heart grew heavy with loneliness and he longed for a human voice to answer to his own. At night sleep departed from his eyelids and he lay until morning staring into the darkness and longing for the dawn.

Many days and many nights Wau-pee struggled with the silence and darkness and with the strange unrest which had come upon his spirit; then one day he arose at daybreak and said: "I will go to the village and bring back a wife to be with me in the wigwam, to laugh and sing and make merry, for this loneliness is greater than I can bear."

Then Wau-pee dressed himself in all his rich-

est garments, trimmed with wampum, decked with feathers, and went into the village to find him a wife. But where once they had followed him with tender glances, the maidens now looked upon him coldly, and not one was found to respond to his tardy wooing. So Wau-pee left the village and turned his face again toward his lodge in the forest, but now his heart was heavy and the singing of the wind and the laughter of the waters drew him not as they had done before.

Longer and lonelier grew the days from dawn to darkness, and drearier the nights, for Ne-pah-win, the Spirit of Sleep, had departed from the lodge of the White Hawk, and now he knew that he should not find a wife among the daughters of his people and no longer could the voices of the forest satisfy.

Then, one day Wau-pee came to himself and found that he was weak and faint with long fasting and there was nothing to eat in the lodge, so he put arrows into his quiver and went forth to find food. But his heart was not in the chase, and he walked with his head bowed and his eyes

bent unheeding on the ground, so that he saw not the track of the red deer that crossed his pathway and there was nothing to lure him aside or tempt the arrows from his quiver.

At last he came to the end of the forest and found himself standing on the border of a beautiful grassy plain. It was sprinkled with many colored flowers, and in the center was a circle worn as by the tramping of many feet. Wau-pee looked in wonder at the flowery plain, with its circling pathway, for he knew that no animals of the forest and no creatures of his own kind could have made it without leaving some trace of their coming and their departure.

While Wau-pee stood in the edge of the forest gazing at this strange sight, the sound of music came faintly to his ears. Not from the forest behind him, nor yet from the plain lying out before, but dropping from the sky above came the sounds, nearer and nearer, silvery and sweet, such music as Wau-pee had never heard. Now it seemed directly overhead, and as he looked up he saw a strange object descending out of the heavens; and, straining his eager eyes, he

discerned it to be a great basket in which sat twelve women.

Then Wau-pee remembered the stories the old men in the village had told him of the twelve Daughters of the Stars; how a man once having looked upon them, never saw beauty in the face of another woman, and once having heard the alluring music of their voices, never found peace on the earth again. Strange stories they had told of these beautiful maidens who only came to earth to tempt and try the souls of men, but who never might wed with mortals or live in the country below the stars.

Straight toward the center of the circle came the great basket, and as it drew near Wau-pee saw that all the old men had told him of their beauty was true, for he had seen none to compare with them, not in the villages of his own people nor in the lodges of stranger tribes.

He saw that each maiden carried two slender wands tipped with silver balls, and as the basket touched the earth they leaped out and danced and whirled around the magic circle, striking together the balls as they danced.

Wilder and wilder grew the dance and more alluringly sweet the music. The eyes of the maidens glowed under their flying tresses, and their voices mingled with the silver clashing of the balls. Wau-pee's pulses leaped and the blood coursed tingling through his veins. Forgotten were the warnings of the old men, forgotten the fate of the young men who had suffered their hearts to go after the Daughters of the Stars. All his soul was consumed with the desire to capture one of the dancing maidens and carry her away to be his wife and live with him in his wigwam in the forest.

Slowly he crept forward from his hiding place, gliding stealthily from tree to tree, until he reached a point near the magic circle; then, as the youngest and most beautiful of the maidens whirled past him, he sprang toward her with outstretched arms.

Swift as were his movements, the Daughters of the Stars were swifter, and before he could reach the magic circle they were all safely in the basket and ascending into the sky.

Sad and disappointed, Wau-pee returned to

his lodge to meditate alone upon the beauty of the maidens and the sweetness of their voices. Next day when he went into the forest he put no arrows into his quiver, for the necessity of food was forgotten, and the only desire remaining in the breast of the White Hawk was that he might again behold the beautiful Daughters of the Stars.

Straight toward the flowery plain he made his way. Hoping to approach nearer the maidens, he resolved to use the magic power acquired at his first fasting; and, changing himself into the form of an opossum, he concealed himself behind a fallen log and awaited their coming.

Again he heard the far, sweet music falling from the sky, and then the basket came in sight bearing the twelve sisters to their playground on the flowery plain. Leaping out of the basket, they struck all the silvery balls together until the air tingled and vibrated with the sound, and as they whirled past his hiding place Wau-pee heard the rustling of their garments and caught the nearer gleam of their starry eyes.

Stealing from behind the fallen log, he made

his way cautiously toward the circle, but suddenly the music stopped with a crash, and before the White Hawk could advance or retreat the maidens had leaped into the car and were rising into the air.

Again Wau-pee returned in sorrow to his lodge. Now he had looked longer upon the Star-Maidens, and all beauty had departed from the earth. There was naught in the voices of the forest, in the rushing of the rivers, in the echoes of the mountains, or the smiling, silent valleys to satisfy the soul of the White Hawk. Only when the stars of evening trembled in the sky above him did he gaze enrapt and dreaming of the tender, radiant beauty of the Daughters of the Starland, daughters of the chieftain O-jis-hon-da.

Another night Wau-pee spent beside his lodge-fire planning how he might outwit them and capture one of the maidens to be his wife.

Again he left his bow and arrows in the wigwam and went out to the flowery plain beyond the forest. As he looked about, seeking how he might hide himself near the magic circle, he beheld the trunk of a dead tree standing

beside the pathway, and about it were some field-mice scampering in and out the hollow spaces. Then the thought came to Wau-pee to take upon himself the form of one of these small creatures that he might easier approach the maidens unobserved.

As on other days the basket descended heralded by the music of the silver balls. But now the Daughters of the Stars had grown very cautious and they did not begin their dance at once, but looked about to see if there might be a spy upon their movements. There was nothing in sight save the trunk of a dead tree with the mice scampering about it, but as if to make sure that nothing larger could be hidden within, the youngest of the sisters approached and struck it a blow with her silver ball. And then there sprang up at her side a tall young man, who seized her in his arms and bore her away into the forest. In vain she called to her sisters for help, for they, seeing that they could not save her, sprang into the car and arose quickly into the air.

Very tenderly Wau-pee comforted the Star-Maiden as he bore her away to his lodge in the

forest. The wands with their silver balls he concealed beneath a heap of skins, that there might be nothing to remind her of the life from which he had taken her, and then with gentle wooing he won the heart of the Star-Maiden until she became reconciled to have for her husband the brave and handsome White Hawk.

Very happy were the lovers. Wau-pee taught the Star-Maiden how to cook their food and dress the skins, and to make beautiful their garments with quills, and dyes, and wampum; and as she sat beside him and listened to his stories while she worked, she forgot her sisters in Starland and the magic circle on the flowery plain.

But bye and bye, when many moons had passed Wau-pee went again to the forest to hunt, and the Star-Maiden was left alone in the lodge. Then her thoughts returned to her sisters and to her aged father O-jis-hon-da, who had sorely missed her and grieved for her many days. Very long and lonely were the hours while Wau-pee was away in the forest, for there were no voices to speak to the maiden, and more and more her

heart went after her own people and her own home in the distant Starland.

One day she found the silver balls, which Wau-pee had hidden when first he brought her to his lodge. When she struck them together and their music smote her ear, all her soul awoke with longing, and she knew that the decree of the Master of Life must be fulfilled, and that it was not given her to live among mortals or to find happiness below the Stars.

Day after day Wau-pee left the lodge with his bow and arrows, and day after day the maiden remained alone with only the music of the silver balls for company. When Wau-pee returned at evening he found her moving with slow step and eyes heavy as a sky overcast with rain-clouds.

Thus passed the Moon of Snow-Shoes, then the ice melted in the lakes and rivers, and the snow disappeared from the sheltered coves and hollows in the forest. Along the streams appeared the tender green of sprouting rushes and the trees in the forest flushed with swelling buds. Segwun, the Spring, had breathed upon the meadows and the song of O-wa-issa was heard in the land.

Then the maiden remembered the flowery plain where she had danced with her sisters through many Summers, and her heart grew sick with longing and her eyes heavy with weeping, so that when Wau-pee came home from the hunt he found no kettle bubbling over the fire and no fish baking on the coals.

One day after the White Hawk had left the lodge the maiden went out to the meadows and returning with an armful of rushes she fell to braiding a basket. All day her fingers moved swiftly, in and out among the rushes, weaving them close and strong, and while she worked she sang softly to herself, the same strange, alluring music to which she had danced with her sisters on the flowery plain. Then when evening came she hid the basket under a heap of skins and hung the kettle over the lodge-fire, that there might be food ready against Wau-pee's return. There were no tears that night in the eyes of the Star-Maiden as they shone on the White Hawk from the shadows beyond the lodge-fire, but they glowed strange and mysterious in the dusk,

thrilling but remote as the lamps that shone in the sky above them.

On the next day and the next, after Wau-pee had gone out into the forest, the Star-Maiden brought forth the basket of rushes from its hiding place and braided and sang until the coming of evening. At last the basket was finished and for many days it lay hidden under the heap of skins, for now that all things were ready for her departure the heart of the Star-Maiden yearned over her brave and handsome husband, and she longed to carry him with her to her own home in Starland. But this was not permitted her, and one balmy day in the Moon of Leaves, after Wau-pee had gone away into the forest, she brought forth the basket and hurried with it through the forest. Running, stumbling over stumps and stones and roots of trees, she made her way to the flowery plain. Straight to the center of the circle she bore the basket, and, seating herself in it, she struck together the silver balls. Once, twice, thrice, then she lifted her voice in the strange, sweet chant which had entranced the ears of the White Hawk on that first day when he be-

held the Daughters of the Stars descending to earth.

Loud and clear rang her voice, mingling with the crash of the silver balls, and as she sang she forgot the brave and handsome White Hawk, forgot the lodge that she had left in the forest, forgot everything save her sisters and her father, the old chief of Starland, whom she had not seen for many moons.

Now Wau-pee, weary and unsuccessful in the hunt, was returning to his lodge, when suddenly there came to him on the wind the sound of distant music. Then his feet halted in the forest pathway, and his heart stood still in his breast, for he knew it to be the same alluring music which heralded the arrival and departure of the Daughters of the Stars. But now there was only one voice singing, the voice which for twelve moons had made music in his own wigwam.

Fleet as the swiftest deer, Wau-pee sped toward the plain, but when he reached the border of the forest he saw a car in which sat one woman ascending into the sky, and then he knew that it was as the old men had told him and that a

Daughter of the Stars might never live upon the earth. In vain he lifted his voice in entreaty to her to return. Higher and higher arose the basket and fainter and fainter grew the music which fell from it, until the last sounds melted away into silence and the receding speck disappeared from the sky.

Then Wau-pee returned to his lodge lonely and sorrowful as he had been before the coming of the Star-Maiden. He went out no more to fish and hunt, and again Ne-pah-win departed from his wigwam.

Very happy for awhile was the maiden with her sisters, so happy that there came no thought of Wau-pee and his lodge in the deep forest. In their magic car they journeyed over the kingdom of O-jis-hon-da, and all the plains of heaven were illumined in honor of the return of the Daughter of the Stars, so that the people on the earth below marveled at the wonderful brilliance of the evening sky. But bye and bye the grieving of Wau-pee reached her from his lonely lodge in the forest, and she knew that he was wasted with famine and weak with fasting, and that already

Pau-guk, the Death Phantom, was lurking near him in the shadows.

Then the Star-Maiden grew lonely and sad, and she sang no more with her sisters, neither did she go with them on their journeys over the plains of Starland. Her heart was with her husband on the earth, and she longed to be with him and to comfort him in his loneliness.

One day O-jis-hon-da called his daughter to him and said: "I have beheld your sadness, my daughter, and it is my will that all about me should be happy. It is not permitted that a Daughter of the Stars should live upon the earth, neither may you now be satisfied in Starland without your lover. Take the basket and silver balls and go back to earth and bring the White Hawk to live with us in the Land of the Stars. But tell him that as an offering for his bride he must bring to us, not blankets, and skins, and wampum, but he must bring to us one of every creature that walks or flies or crawls upon the earth. The basket is small and they are many, but if the White Hawk is wise enough to become the son of O-jis-hon-da he will find a way."

Then the Daughter of the Stars took the basket and did as she was commanded, but her heart was very heavy, for she knew not how Wau-pee could bring the offering which her father required.

She found him sitting in his lodge weak and faint from fasting, but when she looked into his eyes, her own wet and gleaming, and gave to him the message of O-jis-hon-da, his gaunt form straightened and he said: "Fear not, Ne-ne-moo-sha, it shall be as he wills. I go to fulfill his commands, and we shall be separated no more. Wait for me with patience, and before another moon shall wane I will carry to your father one of every creature that walks, or flies, or crawls below the stars."

Then Wau-pee arose and ate the food which the Star-Maiden set before him, and prepared for the work that was assigned him. New arrows he made for his quiver, keen and strong and winged with feathers; traps and snares he made, and long lines of twisted cedar. Along the streams and lakes he hid the snares and laid the lines, and swift on the trail of the animals in the forest he sped with his bow and arrows.

Well did Wau-pee, the White Hawk, work, and well did he use all his skill and cunning, and every night when he came home to his lodge he brought beaks, and wings, and skins, and claws of the creatures that he had taken. When the Star-Maiden beheld what he was doing she knew that it was true, as she had told her father, and that Wau-pee was wise and great enough to become the son of the Chief of the Stars.

At last the work was finished and Wau-pee and the Star-Maiden were taken up into the skies with the trophies which he had gathered, and when O-jis-hon-da saw how cunningly had been fulfilled his commands, he said: "Welcome to the Land of the Stars, my son, to a place among my people and to rule over them in my stead. The great Master of Life did not bless me with a son and to the husband of my youngest and best loved daughter it is given to become the ruler of the Land of the Stars."

Then O-jis-hon-da made a great feast and called his people together that they might celebrate the marriage of his daughter and behold the strange things which her husband had brought

from the country below the stars. Forth through all his dominions went messengers bearing wands of willow, and in great companies they came to the feast, gorgeous in feathers and paint and belts of wampum, to do honor to O-jis-hon-da, and to celebrate the marriage of his daughter.

When they had eaten of the food that O-jis-hon-da had prepared for them, the twelve Daughters of the Stars took up their silver wands, and striking the balls together all the people danced and whirled about the plains of heaven until those on the earth looked up and said, "Behold, the stars are falling!" and where the flowing locks and floating garments of O-jis-hon-da left a shining trail of light behind him, they said, "It is Ish-koo-dah, the comet."

Wearied of the dance, they sat down upon the ground to rest, and the daughters of O-jis-hon-da brought bark of willow and tobacco and filled their pipes for smoking. Then Wau-pee brought into their midst the basket filled with the trophies he had gathered, and at the command of O-jis-hon-da, distributed them to the people. To one he gave a claw, to another a beak, to another a

wing; as his hand found them in the basket, the White Hawk distributed them among the people.

Then a strange and confusing thing happened. As the guests received their tokens from the hand of Wau-pee, in the twinkling of an eye they were changed to birds and beasts and creeping things and fled away from the feast of O-jis-hon-da, away even from the Land of the Stars back to the earth whence the trophies were taken.

When Wau-pee saw what had happened and knew that he was alone with his bride in the Land of the Stars, he said: "Behold, my beloved, we will not follow them back to earth, where there is cold and darkness, and famine and pestilence, and where death at last will divide us. I have won you according to the will of O-jis-hon-da to be my wife and to live with me forever. This is a sign, my beloved," and he caught in his palm two tears that dropped from her eyes. "Behold one is for me and one for thee. We go not back to earth, but forever remain in the heavens side by side."

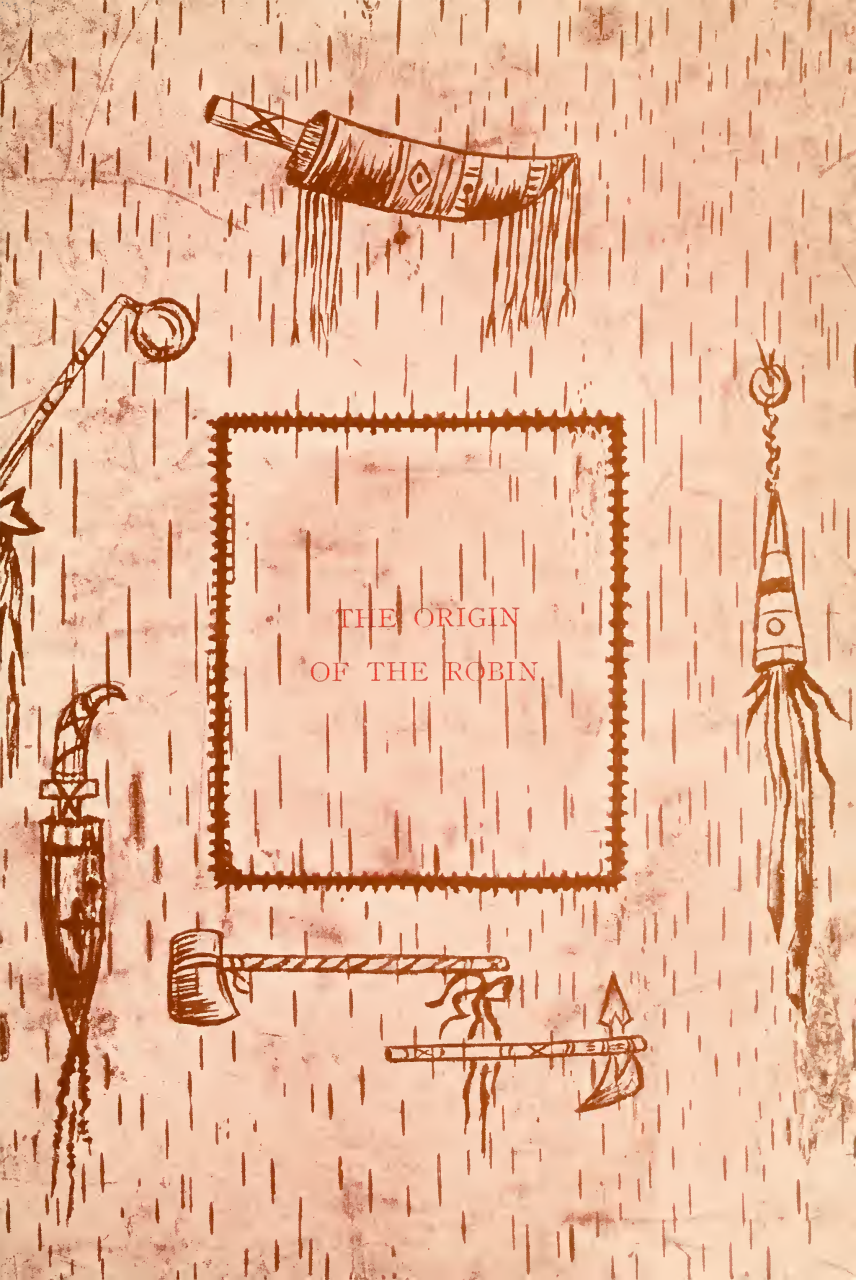
And to this day there is seen among the serene and shining lights of heaven two stars set side by

side, that those of earth who look upon them may learn from the story of Wau-pee and his bride, that not Here nor Hereafter, may the souls of those who love truly be divided.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ROBIN.

ONCE upon a time there lived in the country of the Ojibways, an old man who had one son. Now he had been a great warrior in the days when he led his people in battle, and many of the enemies' strong men had he slain. Fleet of foot was he also, so that only the deer of the forest could out-run him; strong of arm was he, and when in their games the young men wrestled together there was none in all the tribe able to stand before him.

So the pride of the old man was very great, and when at last age came upon him and dimmed his eye, and withered his arm, and made his feet to halt where once they had gone so swiftly, he sat alone and sad in his lodge, and thought of the triumphs of his youth. Then his eyes turned toward the son of his old age, and his heart yearned that in him might be restored the glories


THE ORIGIN
OF THE ROBIN

of the years that had departed. And as the youth grew the father's ambition grew with him, until naught was left in the old man's heart save a fierce and impatient longing to see this his son fulfill all his desires and become a mighty man among his people.

Now, a kind and gentle lad was the son of the old warrior, who well deserved his father's love; but not in battle would he lead his people, and not in the sports of the young men would he excel, for the strength of the father's arm, the swiftness of the father's foot, and the courage of the father's heart, had not descended to this his son. Mild and gentle as a woman was he, with eyes like a fawn's and a countenance beautiful to look on, but only when driven by the father's upbraidings could he be induced to join the young men of the village in their ball play and wrestling, or follow them in the hunt.

But still the old warrior nursed his ambition over the lodge-fire and looked forward to the time when his son would make his first fast, for even though he lacked swiftness, and strength, and courage, if so be he possessed endurance, he

might fast longer than any other lad of the tribe, and so win the favor of the great Master of Life, who would make him a leader among his people.

At last the long looked for time arrived, and the father's heart grew hot with anxiety that his son, who had so sorely disappointed his hopes, might have strength and endurance for the ordeal before him. So he built him a fasting-lodge apart from the village on the bank of a small stream, and spreading a mat upon the floor, he left him with many exhortations to courage and endurance.

Day after day, and night after night the lad lay on the mat with his face covered, and every day the father came to encourage him, and tell of the honor and renown that would be his if he was strong and kept his fast for twelve days. At night the youth's dreams were strange and fitful, but nothing foretold the greatness which his father coveted. Weak, and faint, and haggard he grew with the long fast, and when his father came on the ninth day he found him prone on the mat and half-dead with hunger. Feebly he plead with his father that he might be allowed

to break his fast, for that night in his dreams the Spirits had foretold of disaster if he persisted in the ambitious undertaking.

But the father hardened his heart to the lad's pleading and to the warning of the Spirits, while he bade him keep his fast but one day longer. Every lad in the village had fasted nine days, and what availed it for a weakling like himself to do no better? He craved great gifts from the Master of Life, and if he would have them, he must make a great sacrifice. It was only because he was weak and cowardly that he begged for food. Only one day more and perhaps the Great Spirit would give him strength for another and still another, then he would go back to the village honored above all his companions and respected by the old men. Only one day more! and the old man turned away, leaving the lad lying on his mat in the fasting-lodge.

Then the father determined that not because of his yielding should the youth fail in his endeavor, so not the next day nor the next did he go to the fasting-lodge without the village, but on the morning of the twelfth day he awoke with a strange

foreboding in his heart for the lad whom he had left alone so long in his weakness and hunger, and, taking food, he hurried away to the lodge on the bank of the stream.

As the old man approached he heard voices within, and, drawing nearer, he recognized the voice of his son speaking to himself. Cautiously he approached, and lifting the curtain before the door, he saw the lad standing in the center of the lodge painting his body with red paint and speaking as if to an invisible listener while he worked:

"The ambition of my father has driven away the Good Spirits," the lad said, "but I have obeyed, and the Great Master of Life will not let me suffer longer. He has called me to another existence, where food and shelter will be provided for me, and where my pathway will be light as air. Not in leaping and running, not in war and bloodshed could I win honor and renown, so he has given wings to my halting feet, and ordered my life in ways of happiness and peace."

"My son, my son! Comfort of my old age, leave me not!" the old man cried, dropping on his knees before the boy.

For a moment the youth looked down upon his father with pity in his eyes, then he said:

"Regret me not, Kne-ha, my father; it was not given me to be a great hunter and warrior, and for you there remained disappointment and bitterness. The Great Spirit creates us as he thinks best, and not by long fasting and prayer may we change our condition in life and turn aside his will concerning us. Sorrow not for me, for I shall be happy; neither fear my anger, for in token of my good will you will always find me near the dwellings of men. I shall be their friend and shall become to them a harbinger of joy and peace."

As he spoke, he spread the bright vermillion dyes over his breast and shoulders as far as he could reach, then, lifting his arms above his head, he disappeared through the smoke-flue to be seen no more; but outside on the tallest lodge pole perched a robin red-breast caroling a new song among the melodies of the birds. And from that day to this, the O-pe-chee, the robin, has been the friend of mankind, making his home near their dwellings and receiving his food at their hands, and none is found cruel enough to turn an arrow against him.

THE ENCHANTED MOCCASINS.

IT was many years before Me-sha-way, the Little Elk, knew that there were any other people in the world beside himself and his sister, Yo-yo-hon-to. It mattered very little to Me-sha-way, for he was never lonely: the birds in the trees sang to him, the animals in the forest played with him, the stars in the sky shone on him, and all the broad and beautiful earth was made for Me-sha-way and his sister, Yo-yo-hon-to.

Then there were the Spirits of the Air that spoke to him when he was alone in the forest. Out of the wandering breezes that stirred the pine trees, out of the vast silence around him, the Spirits of the Air whispered strange things to the soul of the Little Elk, things that moved, and calmed, and thrilled him, but things for which the tongue of Me-sha-way knew no speech nor language.

THE ENCHANTED MOCCASINS

Also, there were the Ne-ba-naw-baigs, the Spirits of the Water, and sometimes the eyes of Me-sha-way had almost seen them when he looked long into the shadowy depths of the placid lakes. Sometimes he had caught the glitter of the wampum on their garments as they danced and sported in the rapids, sometimes he had heard their voices in the roar of the cataract and the surging of the torrents, and always as he sat beside the falls in the river and looked into the swirling mists that arose from them, he could see tresses of their floating hair and tints of their rainbow colored garments.

Then there was the sandy beach where the Puk-wud-jies danced. True, Me-sha-way had never seen them, but sometimes when he sat long on moonlight nights, awaiting their coming, he had heard faint sounds of distant music in the air around and above him, and he knew they were not far away, and when he returned to the sand beach in the morning, he found the prints of many tiny feet showing where they had held their revels after he grew weary and fell asleep.

When Winter came upon the land and drove the

birds of the forest and the marshes away to the Southland, the Puk-wud-jies danced no more on the sandy beach, and the rivers and lakes were roofed with ice, so that Me-sha-way saw no signs of the rainbow garments of the Ne-ba-naw-baigs, for they had gone to their warm safe lodges in the Under-Water World.

Then Yo-yo-hon-to drew the curtain of skins close over the lodge door to shut out the icy blast, and that Me-sha-way might not grow lonely, she told him stories while she taught him to string his bow and wing his arrows that he might go out into the winter forest and find for them food.

At first Yo-yo-hon-to's stories were all about the birds and the beasts, the wind and the stars, the Spirits of the Air and Water, and all the mysterious things of the Here and the Hereafter. She showed him the shining pathway across the heavens at night where the ghosts of the departed pass back and forth from earth to the Kingdom of Ponemah. She told him of the rainbow on the clouds by day, and that it is the Hereafter of the flowers, where all that have bloomed on earth are taken to bloom in the sky. She told

him of the War of the Winds and the Council of the Stars. Many stories Yo-yo-hon-to told to her brother, the Little Elk, so that he did not miss the birds from the forest nor the flowers from the meadows and forgot that the days were cold and dark.

As Me-sha-way grew from childhood into manhood there was a change in the stories of Yo-yo-hon-to. Now she told him of the great world which lay many days' journey from their lodge, where tribes of his own people lived together in villages. She told him of great forests and mighty rivers, of broad plains and green meadows such as he had never seen. Strange stories she told him of a Great Water where all the rivers and all the streams in the world came together, where one might paddle his canoe for many days without coming to the end of it, and where he might fish for many moons without taking all the fish that were in it. She told him of the lodge of the Under-Water Manitou which was beneath the Big-Sea-Water, and how when the God of Waters was angry, all the waves arose in fury before the breath of his wrath, so that everything

upon the face of the Great Water was destroyed. But most of all she told him of life in the villages, how they built their lodges, how they made and decked their garments, of their wars and their hunting, of their feasts and their councils.

Very wonderful were the stories of Yo-yo-hon-to, and to encourage her in talking, Me-sha-way heaped the pine cones on the lodge-fire and turned the logs, sending the sparks in showers up the smoke-flue, until at last Yo-yo-hon-to grew weary, and wrapping herself in her blanket, lay down to sleep.

Then Me-sha-way sat alone in the lodge, but he forgot to keep the fire burning, and while he mused it sputtered and died into ashes. Then Ne-pah-win stole into the lodge and touched his eyelids, and he, too, lay down on his bed of skins to sleep. As he slept he dreamed strange dreams of the people he had never seen, and of life in the far-off villages. He dreamed of the wars and the hunting, of the feasts and the dancing, and sometimes there came visions of maidens like Yo-yo-hon-to, only younger and fairer than she, and their hair was as the floating tresses of the Ne-ba-

naw-baigs, and their eyes bright and tender like the stars of evening.

As the days went by Yo-yo-hon-to saw that Me-sha-way was growing moody and unhappy. He went no more to hunt and fish, but walked many miles through the forest, and rowed many days on the lake without taking fish or game. At night he asked no more for stories, but sat gazing silently into the fire until Yo-yo-hon-to laid down on her bed and slept, and sometimes when she awoke in the grey light of the morning, she saw him still sitting over the dead lodge-fire.

Then Yo-yo-hon-to knew that the time was near at hand of which the Shau-go-da-ya, the Old Woman, had told her when she sent them away to live alone in the Northland, the time when Me-sha-way must return to their people, and when many strange things should befall him. But Yo-yo-hon-to thought on it in her heart and kept still, for it was forbidden her to speak to Me-sha-way, and only the Shau-go-da-ya could tell him when the time was fully come.

At last Me-sha-way said to his sister, "I am lonely, Yo-yo-hon-to, and I am going to find the

villages of my people. I am going to see the feasts and the dancing; I am going to meet the warriors and the women, and if the Great Spirit so wills it, I shall bring back one to live with us in the wigwam and to be my wife."

Yo-yo-hon-to said no word, but she put on her brother his best garments, she bound the eagle feathers about his brow, and, turning his face to the Southward, she bade him travel in that direction until he came to the lodge of the Shau-go-da-ya, who would direct him on the rest of his journey. Thus Me-sha-way left his sister and went to seek the villages of his people, went to see the feasts and councils, to meet the warriors and the women, and to find a wife to live with him in his wigwam.

Three days he traveled to the Southward, as Yo-yo-hon-to had commanded. There were animals in the forest and on the prairies, and when he was hungry he killed and ate; when he was weary he lay down on a bed of leaves and slept, and so he continued on his journey.

On the evening of the third day he saw before him in the forest a wigwam made of bark, and

when he came near, he found the Shau-go-da-ya sitting within. She was old and bent, and grey locks fell about her brown and wrinkled face. Around her shoulders was a mantle of scalps, and her withered and trembling hands rested upon a staff to which hung fringes made from the beaks and claws of birds.

A strange and terrible creature was the Shau-go-da-ya as she crouched in the shadow of the wigwam. As the form of Me-sha-way darkened the lodge door, she looked up at him with eyes that glowed like live coals, and resting her hands upon the staff, she arose to her feet. Then Me-sha-way started back in alarm, for, as she lifted the staff the beaks and claws screamed and called and sang together, every bird of the forest in its own language, and as she walked the fringes of scalps swayed and trembled, and laughed and shouted with horrid laughter.

"Fear not, No-sis, my grandson," the Old Woman said, "I shall not harm you. I only have these to keep me company when I am alone, but now I have no need of them," and she set aside the staff and dropped the mantle of scalps to the

floor of the wigwam. "I have been waiting for you for many days. See, I have kept the fire burning and the kettle boiling. There is fat in it for you to eat and a bed where you may sleep. Come in, my grandson; eat and rest, for there is a long and wearying journey before you, and many dangers to encounter."

So the Shau-go-da-ya gave Me-sha-way fat from the kettle to eat, and pointed to a bed of skins where he lay down and slept. When he arose in the morning rested and refreshed, she again gave him food, and when he had eaten, she said:

"There is nothing you would tell me, my grandson, that is not already known to me. I know of the journey on which you are going, and it is permitted me to give you aid, but on your own wisdom and courage will depend your success. Many dangers await you, but to reward you for them all the Great Spirit has selected a beautiful maiden to be your wife. But be not over confident. Many have seen her to desire her, and the bravest of the tribes have sought in vain to win her.

"Three days' journey to the eastward you will find the village where she lives with her father, the chief of the tribe. Very carefully he guards his beautiful daughter, and vows that none save the man of his own choosing shall marry her, and that he shall win her by such feats of skill and endurance as never man endured before. That he may keep her more securely he has built a lodge for her in the top of the tallest tree in the village, and not one of her loves has yet been able to approach near enough to gain speech with the maiden.

"This is the woman whom the Great Spirit has selected to be your wife; but if you secure her you must be wise, and strong, and very cunning. To aid you in your undertaking, I give you these magic bones from the medicine dance which will enable you to change your form at will, and a pair of enchanted moccasins made from the skin of a deer slain by Na-na-bo-zho. They will be of much service to you on your journey, for the feet of the one who wears them will never weary, and when hard pressed by the enemy, he has but to step out of the moccasins

and they will go forward of their own accord, and lead him away on a false trail. Take them, my grandson; remember all I have told you, and may the Great Spirit give you success!"

Me-sha-way took the small white bones and dropped them into his meda-bag. He stripped from his feet the worn moccasins which Yo-yo-hon-to had made for him, and put on in their place the enchanted moccasins of the Shau-go-da-ya. Then, eager to be on his way, he thanked her for her aid, and, with feet light as down, resumed his journey.

Three days Me-sha-way traveled to the eastward as the Shau-go-da-ya had bidden him, and on the fourth he came in sight of the village where lived the chief of the tribe. From afar he could discern the tall tree with the lodge in its topmost branches, and his step quickened, and his pulse leaped as he thought on the beauty of the maiden whom none had been brave enough to win, and he determined that never would he return to his wigwam in the Northland until he could take her for his bride.

In the center of the village stood the lodge of

the chief, and, as Me-sha-way approached, he came out to greet him.

"Welcome, my son," said the chief. "It is many days since a stranger has been in the village to seek my daughter in marriage. The people are growing weary of feasts and dancing, and long for something to make the time pass more quickly. See, her lodge is there in the tree-top, and if you can reach it, she is yours; but, be warned, my son, others have been before you, and if you fail, your scalp also shall adorn the mantle of the Shau-go-da-ya."

While the chief spoke the people of the village were gathering to see the sport. Me-sha-way wondered how so many had failed in the accomplishment of a task which seemed so easy, but he made no boast as he replied to the challenge of the chief.

"It shall be as you have said, Great Chief. I have heard of the beauty of the maiden, and my heart desires her. It is the will of the Great Spirit that I shall have her for my bride; but if I am weak and faint-hearted I am not worthy,

and my scalp shall hang not at the belt of a warrior, but on the mantle of the Old Woman."

When he had ceased speaking Me-sha-way began at once to climb the smooth trunk of the tree. Slowly he made his way until he reached the lowest branches, then he ascended rapidly; higher and higher until it seemed that he must be very near the lodge, but when he paused and looked he found that it was as far above him as at the beginning.

Then a great shout of laughter went up from the people below. "Faster! Faster!" they cried between their shouts and their laughing. "Faster! or the lodge will soon reach to the land of the stars! See how he stops to rest and pants like a deer weary with running! Come back, Me-sha-way, you climb up like a snail! Only the Adji-dau-mo has ever been to the lodge of the chief's daughter, and the Shau-go-da-ya cries for a new scalp for her mantle."

Then Me-sha-way saw that faster than he could climb the tree was growing toward the stars, but at the taunting words of the people he remembered the magic bones in his meda-bag, and quick

as a thought Me-sha-way disappeared, and in his stead was a squirrel scampering up the bark of the tree.

Now he felt himself gaining and the shouts and laughter below ceased, or else the tree had grown so tall that their voices no longer reached him. Nearer and nearer he approached the lodge, when suddenly he felt the tree shaken by a mighty wind and he knew that Mud-je-ke-wis, the Ruler of the Winds, was fighting with the chief, and he was indeed great and strong who would be able to withstand him.

Wilder and wilder grew the tempest and the branches swayed and lashed, and beat each other, while all the forest around the village bowed and bent before the anger of the Mud-je-ke-wis. Still the squirrel clung close to the writhing tree until a mighty gust from the nostrils of the angry Wind God tore him from the shelter and dashed him to the ground.

"Now I have you!" cried the chief, as he drew his bow and rushed upon the fallen Adji-dau-mo, but before he could loose the arrow from the bow-string, a tall young Indian sprang up from the

ground and with one leap in his enchanted moccasins was out of sight.

Then began the race between the chief and Me-sha-way. Easily might the Little Elk outrun him, but he was a great and powerful enemy for whom the winds of heaven made warfare, and Me-sha-way knew that he must be wise and very cunning if he would save his scalp from the mantle of the Shau-go-da-ya.

All day Me-sha-way sped on through the forest, but while the enchanted moccasins could keep weariness from the feet, they were powerless to stay the pangs of hunger, and at last Me-sha-way knew that he must stop and take food before he could proceed farther on the journey. As if in answer to his desire he saw a moose a short distance before him among the trees, and drawing his bow he sent an arrow to its heart. Gathering leaves and twigs he kindled a fire, and soon a savory bit of fat was roasting before the coals.

After Me-sha-way had finished his meal of moose fat he felt his eyes growing heavy for sleep, and remembering the power of the enchanted moccasins to go forward of their own

accord he drew them from his feet and bade them go into the forest, while he concealed himself behind a fallen log and fell asleep.

Bye and bye the chief came upon the smouldering camp-fire and the carcass of the moose close by. He knew that his enemy had stopped here to rest and refresh himself, but seeing the fresh moccasin tracks leading away from it, he followed them into the forest.

The sun was high in the heavens when Me-sha-way awoke next morning to find himself weary and sore from his long journey. Then he remembered with dismay that he had sent his enchanted moccasins to decoy the chief from his trail and now he must proceed without them. Lifting himself from his bed of leaves behind the fallen log, Me-sha-way glanced about him when suddenly his eyes lighted on the moccasins standing side by side before the camp-fire, and at the same moment the chief came to a place where the tracks ceased, leaving him bewildered in the midst of a strange forest.

Hastily Me-sha-way made a meal from the meat of the moose which he had killed the night

before, and thrusting his feet into the moccasins he started toward the village; for Me-sha-way had seen a dark and beautiful face looking down on him from the lodge in the tree-top. The eyes were deep and shining like still pools under the moonlight, and they drew Me-sha-way's heart from his bosom, so that he vowed again and again that he would never return to the Northland without the maiden for his bride.

With the help of the enchanted moccasins he soon reached the village and found himself standing under the tall tree looking up at the lodge in its branches. There was no time to be lost, for the chief might return at any moment, so Me-sha-way again adjured the magic power of the medicine bones, and turning himself into a squirrel, he ran swiftly up the tree trunk.

"It is you, Ne-ne-moo-sha," said the maiden. "I have seen you in my dreams and have waited long for you to come and carry me away from this hateful place. Many times I have feared when others came that they might reach the lodge before the Great Spirit sent you, but always it was

but a scalp for the Shau-go-da-ya, and the face in my dreams remained."

Safely Me-sha-way bore the daughter of the chief to the ground and hand in hand they turned away from the village and entered the forest. But now a new difficulty confronted them, for the maiden, unaccustomed to much travel, soon grew faint and weary, and for two days they journeyed slowly to the westward, sometimes one wearing the enchanted moccasins and sometimes the other. Also they knew, that the chief returning to the village, and finding his daughter gone, would pursue them, and unless they were able to go more swiftly, he would overtake them before they reached the lodge of the Shau-go-da-ya.

"I can go no further," the maiden said, at last sinking down on the moss at his feet. "You must take the enchanted moccasins and s. e yourself while yet there is time, and as for me, I shall go back to my lodge in the tree-top and grow to be an old woman dreaming of you."

Even while the maiden spoke and while Me-sha-way listened with bowed head and sinking heart, a Wau-bos sprang out of the bushes and

cried: "Fly! Fly! Me-sha-way, for your enemy the chief is following close upon you. Forget not the gifts of Shau-go-da-ya and tarry not against the coming of your enemy. Remember the Spirits fight only with the brave, but the faint-hearted must perish."

Again Me-sha-way took courage as he thought of the gift of the Old Woman, and clasping the medicine bones in his hand he breathed a prayer to the Great Spirit for succor; and behold, while the wish yet lingered in his heart, the maiden disappeared and a beautiful O-wa-issa fluttered up from the ground and perched upon the branch of a tree. Then Me-sha-way drew the enchanted moccasins on his own feet and swiftly they hurried forward together, the tall Indian and the blue bird flitting beside him.

It was evening when they came in sight of the lodge of the Old Woman, where Me-sha-way knew they would find food and shelter.

"Come in, my children," she said, as they stood together before the door. "Come in and hide yourselves, for the chief follows close upon your trail."

But Me-sha-way thrust the maiden within and stepping out of his enchanted moccasins, he bade them go forward to the end of the world.

Then he dropped the curtain before the lodge door and the chief passed on following the tracks of the enchanted moccasins, never pausing, never straying, crossing mountains, through the valleys, over marsh and over fenland, straight to the ends of the world, to the Kingdom of Mud-je-ke-wis.

THE JOURNEY OF O-ME-ME.

CHAPTER I.

SOAN-GE-TA-HA was a mighty hunter. His lodge was on the border of the Ku-ha-go, the Great Forest, and there he lived with his wife, Yong-we, and their two children. The eldest of these, O-me-me, was a little girl just old enough to keep the wigwam fire burning and take care of her brother A-meek, the Little Beaver.

There were bear and moose in the forest, pike and sturgeon in the streams, and on the lakes and marshlands water-fowl in abundance. Soan-ge-ta-ha and his family were prosperous and happy. The tribes were at peace and there was plenty in the land.

Soan-ge-ta-ha wore the warmest, brightest blankets of any Ojibway in all the North Country. His war-gearing was rich with wampum and porcupine quills, and the garments of his wife

JOURNEY OF O-ME-ME

and children were of softest, whitest moose skin.

Back of the lodge was a field of corn, where, during the Summer, the glossy blades glistened in the sun, and where swelling ears burst the browning husks of Autumn. Along the streams grew the wild rice, and many baskets Yong-we braided to hold the stores the Autumn harvest would bring. The coming Winter found them with warm furs in the wigwam, and fish and meat in store.

The bow of Soan-ge-ta-ha was made of ash-wood and strung with rawhide. His oaken arrows were tipped with jasper, and every beast of the forest had heard the twang of his bow-string and felt the sting of his arrows.

"Soan-ge-ta-ha comes!" the Wau-bos, the rabbit cried, as she fled trembling to cover, when the mighty hunter went forth with arrows in his quiver.

"Soan-ge-ta-ha comes!" the O-kwa-ho, the wolf, snarled as he skulked into the darkest recesses of the forest. The Me-sha-way, the elk, crashed panting into the thicket, and taking up the cry every creature of the forest fled before

the coming of Soan-ge-ta-ha, the Strong Heart.

"He is a Wa-be-noe, a magician," they said, for flee as they would Soan-ge-ta-ha's arrows found them. No deer so swift but that there was an arrow in his quiver swifter, and no shadow in the forest deep enough to turn aside the aim which trained across Soan-ge-ta-ha's bow-string.

When Seg-wun, the Spring, came back to the land and the south winds blew again on the beaver meadows, Soan-ge-ta-ha went no more to hunt. The days grew longer and the sun warmer until the wild strawberries began to ripen under their sheltering leaves, then Soan-ge-ta-ha put blankets and kettles into his birch-bark canoe, and taking his wife and children he paddled away to the southward where the berries grew in abundance.

In a sheltered cove on the shore of the Gitchee-Gumee they made their camp with a brake of boughs and leaves to the windward. The cradle of the Little Beaver was swung to the bough of a sheltering fir tree, where all day long, as the breezes swept through the forest, they swayed the bough and rocked the cradle.

Early in the morning Soan-ge-ta-ha and his wife took their baskets and wandered away in search of berries, leaving the Little Beaver to the nursing of O-me-me and the wind, but so well did O-ha soothe the little one that O-me-me's duties were light.

The little girl lay on the soft moss under the fir trees and watched the sunshine in the branches above her, and the birds as they darted on swift wings through the tangle of light and shade. She was not lonely as she lay there through many sunny hours, for she knew all the birds in the forest by name, and they had been her companions since she, too, swung in a linden cradle and slept to the lullaby of the wind. She knew their voices, each had a language of its own, and when they gathered in the branches overhead and chattered, and chirped, and rustled their feathers, and flirted their wings, she kept very still and smiled to herself, for she was hearing the latest sensation n bird land. She understood all their plotting and scheming, the insinuations and suspicions in the subdued chirps and confidential chatter. But she never told any one. O-me-me was far too wise

for that, even if it had been possible, but bird-language is peculiar and apart to itself in all the realms of expression, in that it has no translation into human speech.

So the birds had no fear of O-me-me as they peered down through the branches and saw her smiling back at them from her bed of moss. Sometimes they grew very saucy and teased and taunted O-me-me, because they knew how much she desired to talk to them in their own language and could not. They would flutter down to the very lowest boughs above her head, and chirp and screech, and chatter and call. They would circle and wheel and dip, until their wings fanned the little black head on its pillow of moss, and one day a very saucy robin opened his beak and let fall a fat worm which he was carrying home to his family, so that it dropped directly on the tip of O-me-me's little brown nose. This was too much for O-me-me, so she sprang up and seized her father's bow which she well knew how to wield, and all her feathered tormentors flew screeching and frightened into the forest.

Sometimes when O-me-me grew tired of the

chatter of the birds, as she did on occasions, for birds are very like people after all, and given to talking a great deal without saying anything, she wandered off to the shore, and, stretching herself on the steep bank, looked down into the water.

It was very deep and still here. Farther back around the bend, it was shallow and calm, a little bay cut into the sheltering hills, and there the water-lilies grew rank and rich among their glossy leaves. They were very pretty, and O-me-me liked to look at them for awhile; but they did not interest her long, and the water was too shallow to hold much underneath.

So O-me-me seldom lingered by the Water-Lily Lake, but when she wanted to be amused she went to the place where the bank dropped off sheer into deep water, and there she lay for hours peering down into its brown-green depths.

At first there was only water, but as she looked longer she could see tall, floating weeds and grasses, slender sword-like fronds that grew out of nothing and swayed and floated in the current like ferns of the forest swept by the wind.

The longer she looked the farther down she

could see; down, down, down, a misty, mysterious world filled with floating shadows, trees and flowers, ferns and grasses dimly outlined as through smoke. There a shaft of sunshine struck through the overhanging trees and where it pierced the shadows she could see a great pike with shining scales lying among the ferns and water plants, while all about it were strange formless floating creatures belonging to the Under-Water World.

O-me-me knew they were there though she had never been able to see them clearly, though she lay many a sunny day straining her eyes into the watery depths. She knew that down—farther down than any eyes had ever penetrated—was the lodge of Unk-te-ha, the great Under-Water Manitou, of which the White Loon was door-keeper, and where none but the Ne-ba-naw-baigs, the Water Spirits, had ever gone.

It was a strange, silent world, and its people were not like the birds and beasts of the forest, for since Na-na-bo-zho had gone away to the Land of Ponemah, nobody knew their language, and no word ever passed between those on earth

and the creatures of this mysterious world over which their canoes floated.

She often listened to the strange, wild cry of the Loon from the marshes at nightfall, and wondered if she were going to get the keys of the Under-World Water where they were hidden among the rushes, and if she were to watch her, might she sometime learn where they were kept. Her father was wise, and brave, and very strong; it was hard for O-me-me to believe that even Na-na-bo-zho could have been stronger or wiser. Why might not he talk to the Loon and learn from her all their secrets?

Bye and bye she would be older, she would build her a lodge and fast long in the forest; she would pray to the Great Master of Life to hear her, and then she would ask, not for so much wampum, not for a husband who was handsome and brave, but for the keys to the Under-Water World.

One warm, lazy day, as O-me-me lay on the mossy bank, she saw a serpent draw its slow length from the leaves and coil on a flat stone near the water's edge. O-me-me shuddered and

crept away, for she knew it was not really a serpent, but an evil spirit in the serpent's form, and she feared that its eye might fall upon her with its wicked spell.

For some time O-me-me crouched in the shadows under the fir tree and watched the serpent basking on the warm stone. What did it mean, this evil omen which had come to their peaceful camp? All day she was quiet and very thoughtful while she pondered with fear in her heart.

That evening, at nightfall, a stranger paddled into Water-Lily Lake. Springing ashore he drew his canoe up on the bank and strode into the light of their camp-fire. For a moment he stood motionless, the firelight playing upon his bare breast and touching his keen face. O-me-me gazed at him in wonder. He was quite different from any one she had ever seen before, not in the least like her father or the other heavy-featured, stolid Ojibways who had come sometimes to their camp, and sometimes to their lodge on the border of the Great Forest. As he moved forward into the light,

she noticed that his fringed buckskin leggings were striped with crimson, and the meda-bag which hung from his belt, was richly trimmed with wampum in some strange device.

Suddenly, as if feeling the gaze fixed upon him, the stranger turned and looked at O-me-me. There was something in the movement of his sinuous body, and in the gleam of his eye, which recalled the serpent on the stone, and O-me-me crept away to her bed of leaves without food rather than again encounter that strange gaze.

Soan-ge-ta-ha hung another fish over the coals to bake, which was his offering of hospitality to the guest, and Yong-we spread a blanket in a sheltered corner of the camp for him to sleep.

Next morning when O-me-me awoke the stranger was gone, and her father stood on the shore watching a tiny speck rising and falling upon the water.

"Who was it?" she asked, timidly plucking the fringe of his sleeve.

Soan-ge-ta-ha answered without removing his eyes from the receding speck on the water:

"It is Kwan-o-shais-tah, the Great Serpent."

When her father had gone away to fish, she asked her mother the same question, and she looked up from the moccasin she was mending, and said:

"He is an Iroquoise."

Many days Soan-ge-ta-ha and his family lingered at their camp on the Water-Lily Lake. The strawberries dried and dropped from their stems under the reddening leaves, then the low blueberry bushes began to droop with the weight of purpling fruit. Soan-ge-ta-ha and his wife still went forth with their empty baskets in the morning and returned with them full at night. The cradle of the Little Beaver still hung from the fir bough and O-me-me kept watch beside it.

One evening she sat on the hillslope and watched the red sun drop into the lake, and the sky rain crimson mist, until all the water was dyed like blood. She saw the last faint breezes die, leaving the lake like a sheet of molten glass. Then the crimson changed to purple, and the purple to palest violet, while across from the shoreline crept the encroaching shadows. Then, as the new moon swung its slender crescent above the

tree-tops, she crept away to her bed of leaves and fir-spills.

Next morning she awoke with a sense of something new and strange in the air. A soft mist hung over water and sky, and through it the sunshine shone mellow and subdued. The forest-fringed shore line receded in a blue and vapory haze, and the breeze that rustled the long, dried grasses and stirred the pine trees, was not the languorous breath of yesterday, but in a melancholy undertone it whispered of Autumn.

The little river that sent its slender silver line far inland lay still and clear among the rushes, and on the marshlands the purple of the water-hyacinth mingled with browns, and greys, and vivid greens, while, on a slender strip of upland, rising toward the forest, was a glowing sea of goldenrod.

How had it happened, this strange and subtle change which in a single night had created a new heaven and a new earth? She could not understand; but somehow, while she slept, in the secret places of Nature's workshop the change had been wrought.

O-me-me rubbed her eyes to make sure that she was awake, and looked around her. A crane, which had been standing motionless in the shallow water, suddenly spread its wings and lifted its slender body across her field of vision. Yes, it was real and she was wide awake. Then she noticed her father bending over the fire and fashioning a moose-call from a bit of birch-bark.

"It is Autumn," Soan-ge-ta-ha said, as he lifted it to his lips, and sent the dull bleating sound into the forest and echoing across the water. "It is Autumn, the corn is ripe, we will go home," and putting the blankets and kettles into the canoe, they returned to their lodge on the border of the Great Forest.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW days of warm mellow sunshine, when Yong-we and O-me-me stripped the dried husks from the corn-ears and braided them into great yellow fringes with which to festoon their lodge. A few warm, lazy days in the meadows gathering the wild rice, then there came a wind out of the Northland which sent the snow flakes whirling through the forest and turned the water in the lakes and rivers to stone.

Wilder and wilder it grew, beating and twisting the branches of the trees, howling around the lodge, and sending the smoke in blinding gusts down the smoke-flue. But within the lodge there was warmth, and comfort, and light. While the stinging snow flakes drove hissing against the lodge, and the winds made the night hideous, Soan-ge-ta-ha heaped pine cones on the lodge-fire and told wonderful stories of Gush-ke-wah, the Land of Darkness, where lived the giant Kab-bi-

bon-ok-ka, and how the storm was but the breath of his anger, as he fought with his brother Mud-je-ke-wis.

So O-me-me laughed at the storm and the angry giant while she nestled in the furs close to her father's side, and she heeded not that the sun had hidden his face, that the days were short and dark, and the nights long and cold.

Long the Winter lingered in the forest, long the whiteness lay upon the plains—so long that one day Soan-ge-ta-ha saw that the meat and fish were gone and that little rice and corn remained in the baskets. Strapping on his snowshoes, he took his bow and arrows and went into the forest to find food. At night he returned, weary and footsore, with snow upon his garments but with all the arrows in his quiver, for neither deer nor moose had he seen in the forest and never once had he drawn his bow-string. He told no stories that night, but sat moody and silent beside the fire; and next morning, before O-me-me was awake, he had gone forth again into the forest. But always it was the same, for something strange and terrible had happened to Soan-ge-ta-

ha. His lightest, swiftest arrows dropped harmless to the ground and all the beasts of the forest fled taunting and defiant before their old enemy Soan-ge-ta-ha.

Still the rivers remained locked in ice and the sonw lay heavy on the trees. Little by little the rice and corn disappeared and a shadow darker than Winter was upon them—the gaunt shadow of Famine.

Not alone did Winter and Famine come to the lodge of Soan-ge-ta-ha, but other sorrows followed close upon them like ill-omened birds upon their prey. As he returned day after day from his fruitless journeyings in the forest, he found Yong-we wrapped in her blanket and sitting moody and silent over the lodge-fire. No word of comfort or cheer did she speak and not even a glance of the eye did she give him as he came in at night and went out in the morning.

At last the day came when not a handful of rice and corn remained in the baskets. On that morning Yong-we waited until Soan-ge-ta-ha had disappeared in the forest; then she threw aside her blanket and arrayed herself in his war-

garments. Taking a stone axe in her hand, she bade O-me-me keep the wigwam fire burning, and she, too, went away into the forest.

O-me-me did as her mother had commanded, and all day soothed the hungry whimperings of A-meek, the Little Beaver, while she warmed him by the wigwam fire, and at evening her mother returned, bringing meat for their supper. Hurriedly she hung the kettle over the fire and cooked the food; then, bidding the little girl keep still, she removed all traces of the meal before the return of Soan-ge-ta-ha.

Day after day this was repeated, Soan-ge-ta-ha growing weaker and fainter with fasting, until his hair hung dank about his sharpened face and his garments hung loose upon his fleshless limbs.

At first O-me-me's heart was heavy with doubt and perplexity; then it grew like a hot coal in her bosom, for she loved her father more than anything on earth, and she saw him dying with hunger while her mother prepared feasts in secret.

One evening, while the kettle was stewing over the fire, O-me-me watched for an opportunity when her mother was not looking, and, taking a

morsel of fat from the kettle, she wrapped it in a bit of bark and hid it in her bosom.

That night her father came home, as usual, haggard and weary and empty-handed, and, throwing himself on a heap of skins, he was soon asleep. O-me-me lay down beside him and waited until she knew that her mother slept; then she softly awoke him, and, thrusting into his hand the savory bit which she had stolen from the kettle, she told him all the story.

Soan-ge-ta-ha listened to the end; and, springing up from the bed of skins, he threw the bit of fat upon the smoldering coals of the wigwam fire. Then, like the anger of Soan-ge-ta-ha, the fat blazed up in a great flame until all the sky was reddened and all the trees of the forest shivered and trembled in its glow.

When the last sputtering flame had died out in the ashes and the wigwam grew dark, Soan-ge-ta-ha laid him down again on the skins beside O-me-me, and, speaking in whispers, he said:

"I know now why I walk all day in the trail of the moose and deer until my limbs are weary and my body faint, and kill nothing. I know why

your mother answers never a word when I speak, but sits gazing into the wigwam fire. The spell of an enemy is upon me; the spell of that evil Kwan-o-shais-tah, who hates me bitterly; and unless it is broken I must die. Say nothing of what I have told you. To-morrow I go to hunt, as I have done for many days, and do you wait in the wigwam until I return."

When O-me-me awoke next morning her father was gone, and soon her mother arrayed herself in his war-garments and went away into the forest.

Soan-ge-ta-ha was hidden near the lodge awaiting her coming; and, gliding from tree to tree, he followed her as she made her way deeper and deeper into the forest.

At last she came to an opening, in the center of which stood the broken trunk of a dead pine tree. Going up to it, Yong-we struck upon it three times with her stone axe, when a serpent put its head out of a hole near the top and wound its length slowly down the trunk. No sooner had it touched the ground than lo! not a serpent, but the tall, young Iroquoise stood before her; and as he bent his burning eyes upon her, he said:

"Why are you so late, Ne-ne-moo-sha, sweetheart?"

Filled with rage at the sight of his faithless wife and her lover, Soan-ge-ta-ha drew his long useless bow, and, breathing a prayer to the Master of Life for revenge upon his enemy, he loosed the bow-string. Then the evil spell fell from Soan-ge-ta-ha, and behold! not one, but a great cloud of arrows filled the air, and Yong-we and her treacherous lover fell pierced by many darts.

It was late when Soan-ge-ta-ha returned to the lodge where O-me-me waited and watched with her little brother. He brought meat with him for the first time in many days, and with his own hands he prepared their food. When they had eaten until they were satisfied, he said to O-me-me:

"Listen, my child, while I speak. We can live here no longer. Your mother has gone away and she will return no more. She has gone with that evil Kwan-o-shais-tah the Iroquoise. She was not a good mother; she was a meda—a witch. She loves not you, she loves not me; she loves only the Iroquoise. This day the spell which was

upon me is removed, but the evil spirits which have been driven away from me will now pursue you, my children. It is forbidden me to leave this place for many moons, but you must take your little brother and go to a place which I shall show you—a place of peace and safety in the Land of the Setting Sun. A lodge is prepared for you, and if you reach it you will live safe and happy until the Great Spirit calls you from this Land of Snows. It is a long and wearisome journey, and you must make it alone. It is also beset with many dangers, for the Wen-di-goe, the giant of the forest, will pursue you and seek to capture you and the Little Beaver, that he may carry you away to his lodge in the forest. Only one thing have you to do and you will be safe. It is for you to remember all things I shall command you, and obey. Food will be provided for you from day to day, and the flying turtle, the messenger of the Ojibways, will bring me word of you on your long journey. Some day I may come to you in your lodge in the Land of the Setting Sun; and if not there, then Che-bi-abos will guide me to you in the Kingdom of Ponemah."

So spake Soan-ge-ta-ha to his daughter O-me-me, and then lying down on their bed of skins they slept until the morning.

Not a word did Soan-ge-ta-ha speak as he prepared the last meal for his children, for his heart was like a stone in his bosom. Not a word did O-me-me say as she followed him with her eyes. Little she ate, and when the meal was finished Soan-ge-ta-ha wrapped about her his warmest blanket, and taking strong throngs of deer-skin he bound the baby to her back. Placing a little kettle in her hand and a meda-bag of wampum around her neck, he said:

"Take nothing but these upon your journey. Food will be ready for the kettle from day to day and in the bag is everything necessary for your protection. Guard it well, for the lives of yourself and the Little Beaver are within. When the Wen-di-goe shall pursue you so hard that no other means of escape remains, put your hand into the bag and take the first thing which your fingers find and cast it upon the ground behind you. Until that time touch not the bag nor seek to know what it contains. Remember to do all

things as I have commanded you and you will be safe."

O-me-me kept her eyes fastened on her father's face while he spoke, but nothing could she see for the tears that blinded her, and when he had finished no word could she speak for the lump which filled her throat and choked her. Once she opened her lips but only to murmur the word "Kne-ha, my father!" then turning her back to the sky glowing with the sunrise, she walked toward the forest.

Only once did she look back when she reached the summit of the slope. Her father was still standing beside the lodge motionless as a pine tree, but as she paused, hesitating, he lifted his arm as if to urge her onward, then, breathing a prayer to the Master of Life to protect her and to bring her father to her again, O-me-me entered the Great Forest.

All day she walked over the frozen snow, her back bent with its burden and her eyes steadfastly kept upon the ground. All about her was the solitude of the winter woods. Here and there a robin flitted across her pathway, and her

footsteps frightened a flock of brown birds feeding in a cluster of dried weeds. To the right and left were unbroken stretches of snow blurred by cold blue shadows. Lower and lower toward the tree-tops dropped the disc of the sun, but O-me-me trudged on in the track of its yellow beams.

Not until the last bit of its rim had disappeared below the horizon did she pause. Tired and hungry she selected a sheltered hollow where the fir trees, growing close together, had kept the ground free from snow, and under the ledge of overhanging rocks she built a fire of twigs and pine cones.

Her moccasins were torn and her feet were bleeding. She was benumbed with cold and her body was sore with the weight she had carried all day. It was such a long way from the warm, safe lodge on the border of the forest, and she was so lonely, and as she bent over the fire raking the twigs together, a few tears fell with hissing little splashes in the hot ashes.

Just then there was a rustling in the branches overhead, a crash as of something falling

through the boughs, and a young raccoon dropped upon the ground at O-me-me's feet.

Her heart leaped with joy, and faith in her father's promises rushed back to her. He had told her that food would be provided, and he had kept his word. He said she would be safe if she obeyed, and now she knew there could be nothing to fear.

While the tears dried upon her cheeks she set to work to dress the animal. Soon the kettle was bubbling over the fire, and, after a savory meal, she gathered the baby close to her and lay down and slept.

THE LITTLE BEAVER

CHAPTER III.

Another day's journey and again the sun was dropping low to the tree-tops when O-me-me began to look about her for a place to camp for the night. Again she was weary and faint with hunger, but now she was happy, for all her father's promises were being fulfilled. She was a day's journey nearer the lodge in the Land of the Setting Sun, and not a sign had she seen of the giant of the forest, the evil Wen-di-goe.

She turned aside into a ravine where she hoped to find a sheltered place where she might build her fire, when suddenly, out of the shadows behind her came a voice calling,

"Bak-ah! Bak-ah! Stop! Stop!"

Not only did O-me-me's feet pause in their tracks at the summons, but her heart stood still in her bosom, for she knew it could be none other than the great giant against whom her father had warned her.

Only a moment did she pause, then all weari-

ness fell from her and she sped forward like a frightened Wau-bos over the frozen snow. But O-me-me was no match for her pursuer. The burden of the baby on her back grew heavier and soon she could only stumble forward blindly while the voice came nearer and nearer calling all the while, "Bak-ah! Bak-ah!"

She could hear the crashing of the boughs as his great bulk tore its way through the forest, and the panting of his breath like a strong wind behind her, nearer and nearer, until O-me-me knew that nothing save the charm in her father's meda-bag could save her.

Thrusting her trembling hand into the bag her fingers closed over a small substance which she drew out to the light and found to be a bit of punk. Only a moment she hesitated with doubt, then remembering the raccoon which had fallen beside her camp-fire the night before, she breathed a prayer to the Gitchee Manitou, and cast the punk upon the ground behind her. Then where it fell a great fire sprang up and spread along the sky, so high that none might cross it, and so wide that not in many days could one go around it.

Still O-me-me sped forward in her fear, on and on, leaving the fire and the raging giant far behind her, until at last her knees gave way beneath her and she found herself prone upon the ground.

Here she built her camp-fire and sat down beside it waiting, never doubting that her father's promise of food would be fulfilled. Then, while she waited, there came again a crashing among the branches, and a young beaver fell at her feet. So was food provided, and with the glow of the great fire between her and the enemy, O-me-me lay down and slept.

Thus O-me-me journeyed on from day to day toward her home in the Land of the Setting Sun. Seven days she journeyed through the forest, and now she was growing very lonely, for there was still no sign of the lodge that was prepared for her, and in all the forest there was no creature for her to speak to. The birds, her friends of the summer time, had gone to the Land of Shaw-on-da-see, and the Wau-bos and the Ska-no-do, and all the creatures of the forest fled from her as from a stranger from a far country.

There was no one to speak to in all the desolate

woods, and as O-me-me raked the twigs together on her camp-fire, she wondered how many more nights she must tarry in the forest before she reached the lodge which her father had promised. O-me-me had forgotten to be grateful for the food which was sent her from day to day, and for the great fire which had saved her from the giant. Then there came to her again out of the forest that voice which she had heard before, crying:

"Esa! Esa! Shame! Shame! to flee from your old Nesh-o-miss, Grandfather, who wants but a bit of food from your kettle. Esa! Esa! wicked O-me-me!"

O-me-me had placed the baby on a bed of leaves while she made the fire, but now she seized him and fled from the voice of her enemy. Swift as her feet would carry her she fled in the direction of the glow still lingering behind the trees, and still the voice called close behind her:

"Esa! Esa! wicked O-me-me! Bak-ah! Bak-ah! Wait for your old Nesh-o-miss!"

O-me-me ran on through the forest; but now she had little fear of the giant, for the meda-bag hung safe around her neck, and in it were

charms which would protect her from all danger. Thrusting in her hand for another bit of punk she felt her fingers close over a hard substance which she drew out to the light and found to be not punk at all but a beaver's tooth. Holding it close in her hand she ran on waiting for her pursuer to come nearer that she might taunt him and show him how even a little girl might foil him.

Nearer and nearer he came, and then O-me-me looked back, and, in full security of the charm which she held in her hand, she called to him tauntingly: "Come on! Come on! How slow you are, Nesh-o-miss! See, I am waiting!" Laughing and careless in her safety, O-me-me cast the beaver's tooth from her, but, alas for hapless O-me-me, she cast it not behind her as her father had commanded, but on the ground before! Then where it touched the earth there sprang up a wide and swift flowing river, while close behind her came her enemy, so close that she could see the marks about his eyes and the hideous smile upon his face.

"Now you will wait, my No-sis, my grandchild," he called. "I will run no longer, for surely

we will both sup from the same kettle to-night," and she could hear his panting breath as his steps slowed to a walk.

O-me-me looked at the baby in her arms, which she had promised her father to take care of, and she wondered if it were not better to cast it into the foaming rapids than allow it to fall into the hands of the evil Wen-di-goe. O-me-me was a very brave little girl; she would meet her own punishment and soon she would be with the baby again. She lifted it high in her arms as if to cast it far out into the river beyond the reach of the enemy, when a voice close beside her stayed her arm.

"Wait, wait, O-me-me!" the voice said. "You did not wilfully disobey your father and I have been sent to help you," and there, close under the bank of the river, was a great white loon.

"Yes," the loon continued, speaking to O-me-me, "I know you. I have seen you gathering wild rice on the marshlands near the border of the Great Forest, and I have seen you beside the Water-Lily Lake. I know of your long journey and how brave and patient you have been, and

now I am going to help you across the river and save you from the Wen-di-goe. Take the baby and get upon my back."

So on the great strong wings of the White Loon O-me-me and the Little Beaver were carried across the river and landed safely on the other side, and while she made a fire and cooked their supper she could hear above the roar of the rapids the saw-saw-quan of the Wen-di-goe as he raged up and down the bank of the river seeking means to cross.

O-me-me knew that he would find a way when daylight came, so before it was light she was far upon her journey. But there was great fear in her heart for when she took the beaver's tooth from the meda-bag she discovered that but one charm remained, and on this depended her safety for the remainder of her journey. How long it would be she did not know. Every crackling twig caused her to start with fright, and the call of the beasts in the forest made her heart leap within her with fear. Not once did she pause to rest her weary limbs through the day, but

straight forward she pressed in the track of the sunset.

"So you thought to outrun me, my little No-sis," the voice of O-me-me's enemy again called to her. "Your Nesh-o-miss is old but he is very swift, and not the magic fire nor yet the magic flood could turn him aside. Esa! Esa! O-me-me, when your grandfather would but walk with you and have a bit of fat from your kettle! Surely there is enough to spare him a morsel. The baby is very heavy and you have carried it long. Wait Nesh-o-miss, he is strong and he will carry the baby."

Panting and breathless O-me-me stumbled on through the forest, the voice coming nearer and nearer at every step. She knew she could not outrun him, the great giant who was so tall and strong, but she dare not use the last charm which remained in the meda-bag.

"The baby is very heavy, O-me-me," the voice called, now near than ever before. "You have carried it for many days, O-me-me. Wait for Nesh-o-miss, he is strong and he will carry the baby."

Yes, it was the baby he wanted! There was no doubt in O-me-me's mind now; the precious baby that she had tended since first he opened his eyes and blinked at her in the sunshine of the wigwam door. She had been told that the Wen-di-goe carried the babies far away into the forests, where he killed and ate them, and now he was coming close behind her calling for the baby.

She must save it, no matter what happened afterward, so she seized the last charm in the meda-bag, a bit of flint, and casting it behind her, she sank upon the ground overcome with weariness and fear.

She lay upon the ground waiting for some sign of the Wen-di-goe, expecting every moment to hear his thunderous voice calling her and to see his evil eyes bending over her. But not a sound did she hear, and then she fell to wondering what happened when she threw the last charm to the ground. At last she raised herself from the earth to see what the charm had wrought, and there towering above her she saw the gleaming slopes of a mountain of pure jasper. Yes, she was saved; for nothing could scale the precipitous sides, and

it would take many days for even the tireless Wen-di-goe to go around it.

Filled with a sense of security O-me-me gathered the Little Beaver close to her and lay down on the ground and slept.

"No-sis pen-de-ga, my grandchild, come in." O-me-me moved uneasily on her hard couch. Was it a real voice calling to her so faintly or was it but a part of her dream? Again it sounded clearer but very faint, and now she knew that some one was speaking close to her.

"No-sis pen-de-ga."

O-me-me rubbed her eyes very hard and looked around but not a soul could she see. Behind her towered the shining sides of the jasper mountain and there was no one in the forest that lay before. The voice seemed to come from the earth at her feet, but she could see nothing save a tiny white worm lying among the bits of flint which seemed to have scaled from the sides of the mountain.

"Fear not," the voice again said, and now O-me-me knew that it was the little white worm speaking. "I am a Puk-wud-jie, a fairy. You have never seen me but I have seen you many

times. I have hidden among the ferns that grew around Water-Lily Lake and watched you tend the baby all the summer long. I have come on the winds of Winter and rested on the poles of your wigwam and seen how you kept the fire burning when the days were long and cold, and how you saved the best of the food for the Little Beaver when there was not enough for both. I know how you tried to save your father from starving, and how you obeyed your mother when she was wicked and forgot to be kind. I am the Puk-wud-jie who watches over you always, and will be near to give you aid when you are in need. Many days ago the flying turtle brought me word of your coming and I have been waiting for you. It has been a long journey, but you have been brave. Your last charm is gone and now you are to come in and rest and prepare for the remainder of the journey."

O-me-me looked in doubt and wonder at the great jasper walls towering high above her and then at the little white worm lying among the scales of flint.

"Fear not," the little white worm chirped again,

seeing her hesitation. "Lie down on the ground and close your eyes, when you open them you will see the way."

But still O-me-me hesitated. Might not this be some trick of the Wen-di-goe to deceive her and get her in his power? She had heard of the Puk-wud-jies many times, and knew, that though they were small, they had power to defeat the strongest giant, but she had never seen one and how could she know that what the little white worm told her was true.

"It is right that you should be cautious," the little white worm said, "but the messenger from your father bids you to stop here and rest, that you may be able to continue your journey."

It was enough, and immediately O-me-me did as the little white worm had commanded her. For a moment she lay on the ground with closed eyes, then when she opened them she found that the little white worm was little no longer but larger than O-me-me herself. She looked about for the Little Beaver, but he was nowhere to be seen. In his stead was a tiny white worm, which she was sure had not been there when she closed her eyes.

"Yes, it is the Little Beaver," the little white worm said. "We are all worms together, and now you have only to creep through this hole to the inside of the jasper mountain."

As she spoke she drew herself through a hole in the side of the mountain which was so small O-me-me had not seen it before.

"No-sis pen-de-ga," she called from the other side, and no longer fearing, O-me-me and her little brother followed the Puk-wud-jie through the side of the mountain. A narrow dark passage, and then when they came into the light the little white worm was nowhere in sight, but a little old No-ko-miss with wrinkled face stood smiling down at them.

"Stand up, O-me-me," she said, and then O-me-me stood up her own self again with the baby on her back.

CHAPTER IV.

O-ME-ME stood looking about her in bewilderment, then she rubbed her eyes very hard to make sure that she was awake. So strange and wonderful were the things that had happened to her that she found it hard to separate the events of the day from the dreams of the night. It was all like one long dream from which she could not awake, or like the stories which her father told when they sat together over the lodge-fire on the border of the Great Forest. Only this was more wonderful than any dream O-me-me had ever dreamed, so she still stood looking around her and trying in vain to wake up.

When she went to sleep on the outside of the jasper mountain it was winter, cold, bitter winter, with the ground hard and frozen, and the snow heavy on the trees. Not a flower had she seen since those last days of Autumn when a Spirit came out of the Northland and breathed upon the forests and the meadows. Then the flowers black-

ened and drooped on their stems, and the leaves of the forest withered and fell to the ground. Also, at the coming of this Spirit out of the Northland the birds of the Summer had gone away to the Land of Shaw-on-dasee, and all fair and beautiful things disappeared before the Spirit which heralded the approach of the mighty Kab-bi-bon-ok-ka.

But now a green meadow stretched out before her, and through the midst of it flowed a clear and sparkling stream. Skirting the meadow was a forest, and in the branches flitted her friends of the Summer, the birds that twitted and taunted and teased O-me-me when she was safe and happy in the camp beside the Water-Lily Lake; but now they all sang together: "Welcome! Welcome! O-me-me!"

"Yes, it is true," the little old No-ko-miss said, smiling at O-me-me's bewilderment. "You are not dreaming, but you are in the land of the Puk-wud-jies, a land where you have but to wish and it is done. Here we have whatever weather and whatever season we desire; but now, after your long, cold journey, we have desired this Summer

that you may warm yourself in the breath of Shaw-on-dasee, and hear the song of the O-pe-chee and the O-wa-issa again."

Not a word could O-me-me answer, but she stood looking at the beautiful woodland and the sunny meadow, thinking how delightful it must be to live in a land where one could have sunshine and flowers for the wishing.

While she looked and wondered, suddenly a shower of snow flakes came out of the blue sky, covering her garments and filling her hair, and drifting in heaps about her feet. What could it mean? Had some other Puk-wud-jie suddenly desired a snow storm? How could they manage such conflicting wishes in this strange country? Perhaps it might not be so delightful after all to live in a land where everybody got just what they wanted!

Thicker and faster the flakes came out of the Summer sky, floating and whirling until O-me-me and Little Beaver and the little No-ko-miss were enveloped in a furious storm of snow.

At last O-me-me heard the queer cackling laugh of the little old No-ko-miss:

"No, it is not a real snow storm," she said between her cackling and her laughter. "It is the Little White Medicine Man come to welcome you to the Land of the Puk-wud-jies," and taking O-me-me by the shoulders, the little old No-ko-miss turned her about so that she saw nodding, and dancing, and smiling behind her, the queerest little old man her eyes had ever beheld. His body was painted white, and over his shoulders was a mantle of white wolf skins. A queer head dress of raven's feathers and porcupine quills towered high above him, and on this was heaped a great mass of swan's down, which, as he danced, and whirled, and tossed his feathers, flew in a miniature snow storm around O-me-me.

"Come! Come!" he called, dancing on before, nodding, and whirling, and scattering his snow in their pathway. "Come! Come!" and they followed him across the meadow, up the slope of the hillside and through the village of the Puk-wud-jies.

Not a sound did O-me-me hear as they passed through the village save the chanting of the Little White Medicine Man as he danced on before; but

strange faces peered at her from the tiny lodges as she passed.

On the farther side of the village he led her to a lodge which had been newly swept and spread with fresh fir boughs. As he paused before the lodge door he shook the last remaining bits of down from his quills, and the little old No-ko-miss lifted the curtain from the lodge door inviting O-me-me to enter.

"Here you are to remain," the little No-ko-miss said, "until the Meda of the Puk-wud-jies breaks the spell of the wicked Wen-di-goe, that you may continue your journey in safety. You were given only the charms which were necessary to bring you here, and now the Puk-wud-jies must send you in safety to the lodge in the Land of the Setting Sun."

O-me-me lay down on the bed of fir boughs, grateful for the warmth and comfort after her long and dreary journey, and while she lay there half awake and half asleep, three boys entered the lodge bearing bowls of meat and corn. Their bodies were painted yellow but their heads were white, like that of the Meda, and O-me-me knew

they were the Antelope Boys of whom her father had told her.

The sun was high in the heavens when O-me-me awoke to the sound of the rattles and the drum, and when she arose from her bed of fir boughs the Antelope Boys again stood before her with bowls of food.

When she had finished eating, the little old No-ko-miss entered the lodge nodding and smiling, and bade O-me-me take the Little Beaver and follow her. Wondering what new and strange experiences awaited her, O-me-me did as she was bidden and followed the little old No-ko-miss out of the lodge and into the village through which she had passed before.

Now all the village was astir. Around the medicine lodge, which stood in the center of the village, was gathered a great company of the Puk-wud-jies. Near the door of the lodge lay a canoe of birch-bark and around it crouched eight young men clothed in skins of buffalo. As O-me-me and the little old No-ko-miss came into the circle they arose to their feet and stood in pairs around

the canoe, shaking their mysterious rattles and chanting a strange weird song.

Faster and faster grew the music when two of the young men leaped into the midst of the circle and began to dance. The body of one was painted black and covered with white stars, while the other was striped with red and yellow like rays of sunlight.

As the circle widened about the medicine lodge O-me-me saw that two of the young men, wearing the skins of grizzly bears, remained crouched beside the canoe, and the little old No-ko-miss told her that these represented the evil spirits which brought sickness, and famine, and all trouble to the people. These spirits must first be appeased before the great encounter with the mighty Wendi-goe, the Chief of Evil Spirits.

Faster grew the music and wilder the dance when suddenly the Antelope Boys appeared bearing bowls of food, and breaking through the whirling line of dancers they approached the crouching evil Spirits beside the canoe. Kneeling, they presented the bowls of food, and, after

examining them a moment, the Spirits seized them and made off into the woods.

Then the old men who sat around the circle began to beat their drums of deer's hide, and lifted their voices in a strange, wild chant such as O-me-me had never heard before, while all the people swelled it with their voices. As the music ceased one of the old men leaped into the circle and began to harangue the people. Their prayers had been heard by the Great Master of Life, he told them; because they were untiring in the chase and fearless in battle; because they were kind to the old men, and taught the young ones courage, he had granted them peace, and plenty, and victory over all their enemies. As a proof of this the Chief of Evil Spirits had not yet dared to show his face in their midst.

One after another the old men stood up and harangued the people, boasting of the power of the Puk-wud-jies and challenging the Chief of Evil Spirits, the mighty Wen-di-goe.

When the speeches were ended the people joined in a great shout of triumph, and O-me-me's heart swelled with pride at the courage of the

little people who dared defy the great Wen-di-goe. She wondered at her own terror when he pursued her in the forest, and felt that she could no longer fear one who dare not meet the taunting of the Puk-wud-jies.

Suddenly, while O-me-me listened with swelling pride, the drums and rattles stopped, the boasting of the old men grew still and a hush fell upon the people. All eyes were turned toward the brow of the hill overlooking the village, and following their gaze O-me-me felt her hair creep in terror under its band of deer thongs. There, standing on the summit of the hill loomed the great figure of the Wen-di-goe whom they had been reviling, and to the eyes of O-me-me seemed more terrible than he had ever appeared in the forest.

In his hand he held a staff tipped with crimson, and he rested upon it regarding with contempt the puny people who had dared defy him. The Puk-wud-jies returned his gaze, motionless as if frozen with fear, and he dropped the crimson tip of his staff to the ground, and pushing it on the

earth before him, he rushed upon the village like a destroying hurricane.

The Puk-wud-jies fell back upon one another crying aloud in terror, and O-me-me clutching the baby close to her, searched frantically in the meda-bag, if by any chance another charm remained. On and on she ran in the direction of the opening through which she had entered the jasper mountain, and wondering if, after all, the Puk-wud-jies had deceived her and brought her here to be destroyed by the evil Wen-di-goe. Remembering their own terror she knew this could not be true, and as she stumbled on, the Little White Medicine Man passed her with a rush, going forward to meet the mighty Wen-di-goe.

O-me-me turned to look after him and saw the Wen-di-goe cross the magic circle which surrounded the medicine lodge, and as he did so the Little White Medicine Man likewise leaped into the circle and seized the magic pipe into which the Great Manitou had dropped a coal of living fire.

The Little White Medicine Man held the pipe

before the face of the great Wen-di-goe, and suddenly he stopped as if turned to stone, for nothing evil had ever been able to stand before the living fire of the Great Manitou. His evil eyes glared and his hideous figure stiffened before the Little White Medicine Man and his magic pipe. The women who had fled shrieking before their enemy, seeing him standing helpless in their midst returned and danced and shouted around him in derision.

The Wen-di-goe could not move his eyes from the magic pipe which the Little White Medicine Man held before him. Trembling with fear O-me-me crept back to watch the contest. Which would conquer, the Little White Medicine Man, his frame wasted with much fasting and his face furrowed by many years, or the Wen-di-goe who towered above him, mighty and strong? O-me-me knew not of the live coal which the Great Manitou had dropped from heaven, or she had not feared for the Little White Medicine Man. Earnestly she prayed to the Great Master of Life to strengthen the arms which held the pipe, and even as she prayed the eyes of the evil Wen-

di-goe wavered, his muscles relaxed and the crimson tipped staff fell to the ground.

Then a mighty shout of triumph went up from the village of the Puk-wud-jies, for their enemy was conquered. One of the women sprang into the circle, and seizing the staff, broke it in pieces and flung them into the face of the conquered Wen-di-goe. Emboldened by her act the others followed, pelting him with sticks and stones until he turned and fled into the woods.

Then the old men seized their flutes, and drums, and rattles, and made a joyful noise, while all the Puk-wud-jies danced and shouted at the victory of the Little White Medicine Man. Even the wrinkled little old No-ko-miss seized the hand of O-me-me and drew her into the dancing circle.

"He is gone! He is gone!" she sang. "Our wicked enemy, the great Wen-di-goe, is conquered, and not for twelve moons will he show his face in the land of the Puk-wud-jies. Back to his cave beyond the great North Forest has gone the wicked Wen-di-goe, where the sun never shines and the snow never melts, to the

Land of Gush-ke-wa, the Land of Darkness has gone the evil Wen-di-goe!"

Then the little old No-ko-miss took O-me-me by the hand, and, while all the company of the Puk-wud-jies followed dancing and shouting, and the Little White Medicine Man nodded and whirled and covered her again with his miniature snow storm, they led her to the entrance of the jasper mountain.

CHAPTER V.

O-ME-ME'S heart sank within her as she remembered all the dangers through which she had passed and that now not a single charm remained in the meda-bag. If only she might stay here with these wise and good Little People safe inside the jasper mountain! But her father had bidden her go on to the lodge which was prepared for her in the Land of the Setting Sun, and she dare not stop until his commands had been obeyed. How long the journey might be, and what things should yet befall her, she knew not; but she must go on to the end. As O-me-me walked and pondered with the baby on her back, her head was bowed, and she could not see the snow storm of the Little White Medicine Man for the tears that clouded her eyes.

"Fear not, No-sis," the little old No-ko-miss said as she walked beside her. "Only a few more

days and your journey will be ended. The evil Wen-di-goe is conquered and is now a prisoner in his cave in the Land of Gush-ke-wa. Before he is released you will be safe in your lodge in the Land of the Setting Sun. Only remember all your father told you and it will be well, and remember that the Puk-wud-jies keep watch over children who obey."

Even as the little old No-ko-miss spoke the walls of the jasper mountain melted away and before O-me-me could wipe the tears from her eyes she found herself standing alone in the forest with the baby on her back.

Then again O-me-me rubbed her eyes and wondered if she were awake, for on that day when the little white worm had bidden her come inside the jasper mountain it was winter without, but now the snow was gone, and the earth was carpeted with green and the trees were fresh with swelling buds. A rippling stream twinkled in the sunlight and along its margin grew the earliest flowers of springtime. As O-me-me walked on over the tender grass and soft moss, she saw that her own ragged moccasins had been replaced with

others, new and beaded with wampum, and instead of her torn and travel worn garments she wore a robe of softest moose skin fringed with quills and beaded with wampum. Now she would come to her new home already rich and happy if only the way were not too long and the wicked Wen-di-goe remained in his cave in the Land of Gush-ke-wa.

The forest was now full of song birds, and as O-me-me passed a clump of bushes her old friend the O-pe-chee alighted and perked his saucy head as he sang: "Welcome! Welcome! O-me-me. See, all the birds have come to greet you! The Wa-wa from the far Land of Shaw-on-dasee, the O-wa-issa and the Saw-saw, and even the Adji-dau-mo from the tree-tops calls his greeting to O-me-me. The Se-bow-isha dances and sings to meet you, the meadow blooms with all her brightest flowers. Not unto a far-off land of strangers comes the faithful O-me-me, but unto friends who know and love her. Follow! Follow! O-me-me."

Flitting from bush to bush and from tree to tree flew the O-pe-chee singing always: "Fol-

low! Follow! O-me-me!" and O-me-me taking courage, smiled up at the swelling buds and spring skies and followed through the forest, never resting, never pausing, but no weariness fell upon her and no hunger vexed her.

Noon and evening, and then as the sun dropped low and the sky reddened behind the tree-tops, the forest opened before her, and she knew that she was near her journey's end. Before her stretched a broad green meadow through which flowed a clear stream, like to the meadow and the stream in the Land of the Puk-wud-jies, and then O-me-me knew that they were but revealing to her the beauties of the home to which she was journeying. Beyond the stream the meadow arose to meet the woodland and midway between the stream and the forest stood a wigwam. Its tall poles arose clear against the glowing sky and its white walls were outlined against the dark forest. While she looked and wondered the robin whirled upward from the meadow grasses and perching on the tallest pole of the wigwam sang: "Welcome! Welcome home, O-me-me!"

Yes, it was true! This was indeed the home which her father had promised, and the long, weary journey was over, this beautiful white wigwam beside the crystal river! Here she would live in safety with the Little Beaver and wait for the time when her father should come to be with them.

O-me-me walked through the long meadow grass, and as she crossed the stream and approached the wigwam, the robin lifted his voice and sang as he had never sung before: "Welcome! Welcome home, O-me-me!"

O-me-me paused before the lodge door, eager and yet fearing to enter. What treasures should she find within? Her father had promised that she should never know want again, but that all things needful for her comfort should be provided. What stores of wampum and blankets, and skins must be within the wigwam.

Reaching forth her hand she lifted the curtain of skins which was drawn before the doorway. At first she could see nothing; but as her eyes became accustomed to the darkness she ven-

tured within, to find the wigwam empty except for a bed of fresh fir boughs and a bit of hollow log which stood beneath the smoke-flue.

Then O-me-me's heart dropped like a stone with disappointment, and a great wave of weariness and weakness swept over her. Was this the fulfillment of her father's promise, this bare lodge with only a bed and not even food to eat?

She laid the baby down on the bed of fir boughs and returned to the lodge door. As she stood there looking out over the meadow, the robin flew from the lodge pole, and flitting toward the river, sang: "Follow, follow, O-me-me!" Then she saw that a canoe was drawn up among the rushes, and as she drew near she discovered three freshly caught pike lying in the bottom. In such way had her food been provided, so she took the pike and returned to the lodge. Gathering twigs together she kindled a fire in the lodge, and stooping beside it she began to prepare the fish for cooking. With a sharpened bit of stone which she had picked up beside the river she scraped away the lustrous scales, but while she worked her eyes were

blinded with tears of weariness and disappointment.

She scraped the last fish and placed it in the kettle, and as she arose she dashed the tears from her eyes, and gathering up the scales that lay in a little heap beside her she threw them into the opening of the hollow log. And then there happened the strangest and most wonderful thing that had ever befallen in all the course of O-me-me's strange and wonderful life, stranger even than the punk which kindled the magic fire, or the beaver's tooth which started the mighty river, stranger than the jasper mountain and all the things which she had seen inside, for as O-me-me poured the handful of fish scales into the blackened hollow log there came out at the bottom a stream of beautiful glittering wampum, which rolled over the dark floor of the wigwam and lay like bits of broken rainbow in the ashes of the fire.

Then O-me-me knew that in this manner her father's promise would be made good, that here was given her a mine of wealth which would secure for her all the comforts which she desired,

and that never should she know hunger, or cold, or weariness again.

As O-me-me gathered the wampum from the floor of the wigwam, the breeze which stirred the grasses of the meadow, the rippling waters of the brooklet, and the robin on the lodge pole all sang together in one melodious chorus: "Welcome, welcome home, O-me-me!"

THE END.

FINIS.

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